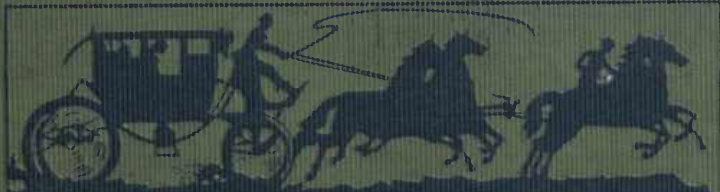




THE LOVES
of the LADY
ARABELLA



Illustrated by
CLARENCE F. UNDERWOOD

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The Loves of the Lady Arabella



CLARENCE T. UNDERWOOD

Arabella

The LOVES
OF *the* LADY
ARABELLA

by

MOLLY·ELLIOT·SEAWELL

*Author of The Fortunes Of Fifi
Children Of Destiny, etc.*

With Illustrations by
Clarence F. Underwood
Decorations by Franklin Booth



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The Loves of the Lady Arabella

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The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I

'Tis not in my nature to be cowed by any woman whatever. Therefore, when I found myself in the presence of my Lady Hawkshaw, in her Chinese drawing-room, with her great black eyes glaring at me, and her huge black plume of feathers nodding at me, as she sat, enveloped in a vast black velvet robe like a pall, I said to myself, "After all, she is but a woman." So I stared back at her with all the coolness in the world — and I was a seeker after favor, too — and but fourteen years of age, and had only seven and sixpence in my pocket. The tall footman who stood behind Lady Hawkshaw's chair made a grimace at me; and I responded by a fierce look, as if I were about to run him through the body.

"Jeames," said her ladyship, "go and make

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

my compliments to Sir Peter Hawkshaw, and say to him that his roistering kept me awake half the night, and consequently I feel very ill this morning; and that his great-nephew, Master Richard Glyn from America, is come after a midshipman's warrant in his Majesty's navy,—and I desire Sir Peter to attend me in my *bow-dwar* immediately."

Her ladyship's French was the queerest imaginable,—yet in her youth she had the French tutor who had taught the daughters of the Regent of France.

There was a silence after the tall footman left, during which my lady and I eyed each other closely. I remembered having heard that she had defied her father, Lord Bosanquet, and one of the greatest family connections in the kingdom, in order to marry Sir Peter, who was then a penniless lieutenant in his Majesty's navy and the son of a drysalter in the city. This same drysalter was my great-grandfather; but I had an infusion of another blood through my mother, God bless her!—who was of a high family and a baronet's daughter. The drysalter strain was honest, but plebeian, while



“ Here is your nephew Tom’s brat.” *Page 3*

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the baronet strain was rather more lofty than honest, I fancy.

Having heard, as I say, of the desperate struggle it cost Lady Hawkshaw to marry her lieutenant, I somewhat expected to find her and Admiral Sir Peter Hawkshaw living like doves in a cage, and was disconcerted at the message her ladyship sent her lord. But I was still more disconcerted when Sir Peter, a short, stout man, with a choleric eye, presently bounced into the room.

“Sir Peter,” said her ladyship, “here is your nephew Tom’s brat, who wants a midshipman’s warrant.”

Sir Peter stopped short, looked me over,—I was tall for my age,—and grinned savagely. I thought it was all up with me and was almost ready to haul down my flag.

“And Sir Peter,” screamed her ladyship, “he must have it!”

“Hang me, my lady!” snapped Sir Peter, “but when did you take such an interest in my nephew Tom’s brat?”

“This very hour,” replied Lady Hawkshaw tartly, and tossing her black plumes haughtily.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“You behaved like a wretch to the boy after the death of his father and mother in America; and God has given you the chance to make amends, and I say he shall have his warrant.”

“Zounds, Madam!” bawled Sir Peter; “since you take the liberty of disposing of my warrants, I presume you are the holder of my commission as Vice-Admiral of the White in his Majesty’s service. Let me know it if you are — let me know it, I say!”

“Stuff!” responded my lady, to which Sir Peter answered something that sounded like “Damme!” and then my attention was distracted from this matrimonial engagement by the silent entrance of two young girls. One of them was about twelve years of age. She had dove-like eyes, and her dark lashes kissed her cheek. She came and stood familiarly by Lady Hawkshaw’s chair; and the gentle affectionateness of her manner toward that redoubtable person amazed me at the time. This was my first sight of Daphne Carmichael; and when she fixed her soft, childish glance upon me, it was like the sight of stars on a cloudy night. But the other one, a tall girl of sixteen

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

or thereabouts, dazzled me so that I am obliged to confess I had no more eyes for Daphne. This older girl was the Lady Arabella Stormont, and was then and always by far the handsomest creature I ever beheld. I shall not attempt to describe her. I will only say that her brilliant face, with such a complexion as I never saw before or since, showed a haughty indifference toward the shabby boy over whom Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw were squabbling, and the sense of my shabbiness and helplessness pierced my heart under Lady Arabella's calmly scornful gaze.

Both of these young girls were the great-nieces of Sir Peter Hawkshaw, but not on the drysalter's side, so they were no blood-relation to me. Sir Peter was their guardian, and Lady Hawkshaw had charge of them, and was most kind and devoted to them in her way. I soon found out that every one of Sir Peter's family had a good friend in Lady Hawkshaw; and I may as well say here that for true devotion and incessant wrangling, I never saw a married pair that equaled Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

The discussion between them concerning me grew hotter, and I grew as hot as the discussion, in thinking what a figure I was making before that divinely beautiful Lady Arabella. I had clean forgotten Daphne. Lady Hawkshaw lugged in a great variety of extraneous matter, reminding Sir Peter of certain awful predictions concerning his future which had been made by the last chaplain who sailed with him. Sir Peter denounced the chaplain as a sniveling dog. Lady Hawkshaw indulged in some French, at which Lady Arabella laughed behind her hand.

The battle royal lasted some time longer, but Lady Hawkshaw's metal was plainly heavier than Sir Peter's; and it ended by Sir Peter's saying to me angrily:

"Very well, sir, to oblige my lady I will give you the remaining midshipman's berth on the *Ajax*, seventy-four. You may go home now, but show yourself aboard the *Ajax* at Portsmouth, before twelve o'clock on this day week, and be very careful to mind your eye."

I had nerved myself to hear with coolness the refusal of this fiery admiral; but his real

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

kindness, disguised under so much of choler, overcame me. I stammered something and stopped, — that hound of a footman was grinning at me, because my eyes were full of tears, and also, perhaps, because my coat was of cheap make, and my shoes needed attention. But at that moment little Daphne, with the greatest artlessness, came up and slipped her little hand into mine, saying:

“He means he is very much obliged to you, uncle, and to you, dear aunt.”

I do not know how I got out of the house, but the next thing I knew I was standing on the street outside. I had been told to go home. I had no home now unless the Bull-in-the-Bush tavern be one. But I did not return to the Bull-in-the-Bush, whose tawdry splendors revolted me now, after I had seen Sir Peter Hawkshaw's imposing house, as much as they had before attracted me. I was tingling with the sense of beauty newly developed in me. I could not forget that exquisite vision of Lady Arabella Stormont, who seemed to my boyish mind more like a white rose-bush in full flower than anything I could call to memory. I made

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

my way instead to the plain, though clean lodgings, where I had spent the years since my parents' death, with good Betty Green, the widow of Corporal Green, late of my father's regiment.

These two excellent but humble creatures had brought me, an orphan, home from my birthplace, America, consigned to Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw. This woman, Betty Green, had been my mother's devoted servant, as her husband had been my father's, and it was thought perfectly safe to send me home with them. But there was a danger which no one foresaw. Betty was one of those strange women who love like a lioness. This lioness' love she felt for me; and for that reason, I believe, she deliberately planned to prevent my family from ever getting hold of me. It is true, on landing in England, her husband's regiment being ordered to Winchester, she went to see Sir Peter Hawkshaw and, I suspect, purposely made him so angry that, Lady Hawkshaw being absent, he almost kicked Betty Green out of the house. That is what I fancy my lady meant when she reproached Sir Peter with cruelty to me. I well remember the air of

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

triumph with which Betty returned and told the corporal of her ill success; then, clasping me in her arms, she burst out with a cry that no admiral nor ladies nor lords neither should take her darling boy away from her. Green, her husband, being a steady, cool-headed fellow, waited until the paroxysm was over, when he told her plainly that she must carry out my parents' instructions, and he himself would go to see Sir Peter as soon as he could. But Fate disposed of this plan by cutting short the corporal's life the next week, most unexpectedly. Then this woman, Betty Green,—illiterate, a stranger in England, and supporting us both by her daily labor,—managed to foil all of the efforts of Admiral Sir Peter Hawkshaw to find me; for he had done all he could to discover the whereabouts of his nephew's orphan. 'Tis not for me to say one word against Betty Green, for she slaved for me as only a woman can slave, and, besides, brought me up in the habits and manners of a gentleman, albeit she did little for my education, and to this day I am prone to be embarrassed when I have a pen in my hand. I can not say that I was happy in the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

devoted, though savage love she lavished upon me. She would not allow me to play with the boys of her own class, and those of my class I never saw. All my clamorings to know something about my family on either side were met by her declaring that she had forgotten where my mother's people lived; and as for Sir Peter, she gave me such a horrifying account of him that I never dreamed it possible to receive any kindness from him. At last, though, on her death-bed, she acknowledged a part of the deception her desperate affection had impelled her to play upon me. The poor soul had actually forgotten about my mother's family, and had destroyed everything relating to them, but directed me to go to Sir Peter; and thus it was that, on the day after I saw Betty Green, my only friend on earth, laid in a pauper's grave, I went to the house of my father's uncle, with the result narrated. When I got back to the humble lodgings where I had lived before Betty's death, I looked up a small box of trinkets of little value which had belonged to my mother, and from the sale of them I got enough to live upon for a week, and to make

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

my way to Portsmouth at the end of it. Either Sir Peter had forgotten to tell me anything about my outfit, or else I had slipped out so quickly — galled by the fear of weeping before that rascally footman — that he had no chance. At all events, I arrived at Portsmouth by the mail-coach, with all of my belongings in one shabby portmanteau.

I shall not describe my feelings during that journey toward the new life that awaited me. In fact, I scarcely recall them coherently; all was a maze, a jumble, and an uproar in my mind.

We got down in the inn yard,—a coach full of passengers,—I the only one who seemed adrift and alone among them. I stood looking about me — at a pert chambermaid who impudently ogled the hostlers and got a kiss in return; at the pretentious entrance to the inn; at all of the bustle and confusion of the arrival of the coach. Presently I saw a young gentleman somewhat older than myself, and wearing the uniform of his Majesty's sea-service, come out of the inn door. He had a very elegant figure, but his face was rather plain. Within

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

five minutes of my first meeting with Giles Vernon, I had an example of what was one of his most striking traits — every woman in sight immediately fixed her attention on him and smiled at him. One was the chambermaid, who left off ogling the hostlers and gaped at this young officer with her coarse, handsome face all aflame; another was the landlady, who followed him to the door, smirking and fanning herself; and the third was a venerable Quakeress, who was about entering the inn, and who beamed benevolently on him as he bowed gallantly in passing. I know not why this should have made such an impression on me; but being young and a fool, I thought beauty was as highly prized by women as by men, and it surprised me that a fellow with a mouth so wide and with something dangerously near a squint should be such a lady-killer. It was common enough for young gentlemen holding midshipmen's warrants to come down by the coach, and as soon as he saw me this young officer called out:

“Halloo, my hearty! Is it a ship of the line or a frigate you are booked for? Or is it one

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

of those damned gun-brigs which are unfit for a gentleman to serve in? ”

Now, the peculiar circumstances of my bringing-up had given me a ridiculous haughtiness, — for Betty Green had never ceased to implore me to remember my quality,— so I replied to this offhand speech in kind.

“ A ship of the line,” said I. “ Damme, do you think I’d serve in a gun-brig? ”

He came up a little closer to me, looked at me attentively, and said,—

“ It’s an infant Rodney, sure. Was not Americus Vesputius your grandfather? And was not your grandmother in love with Noah when he was oakum boy at the Portsmouth docks? ”

I considered this very offensive and, drawing myself up, said,—

“ My grandfather was a baronet, and my grand-uncle is Admiral Sir Peter Hawkshaw, whose flagship, as you may know, is the *Ajax*, seventy-four.”

“ I know him well,” responded my new acquaintance. “ We were drunk together this night week. He bears for arms Lot’s wife

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

after she was turned into a pillar of salt, with the device, 'I thirst'."

This was an allusion to the drysalter. For I soon found that the young gentlemen in the cockpit were intimately acquainted with all of the antecedents, glorious or otherwise, of their superior officers.

The lie in the early part of this sentence was patent to me, but so great was the power to charm of this squinting, wide-mouthed fellow, that I felt myself drawn to him irresistibly, and something in my countenance showed it, for he linked his arm through mine and began again,—

"I know your great-aunt, too, Polly Hawkshaw. Dreadful old girl. I hear she can tack ship as well as the admiral; knows to a shilling what his mess bill is, and teaches him trigonometry when he is on leave."

This was, of course, a vilification, and Lady Hawkshaw's name was not Polly, but Apollonia; but I blush to say I spoke not one word in defense of either her or her name. It occurred to me that my new friend was a person who could give me much information about my

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

outfit and uniforms, and I candidly stated my case to him.

“Come on,” he cried. “There’s a rascal of a haberdasher here who lives off his Majesty’s officers, and I’ll take you there and fit you out; for Sir Peter’s the man to have his young officers smart. A friend of mine — poor fellow! — happened to be caught in mufti in the *Ajax* the other day, and Sir Peter had all hands turned up for an execution. My unhappy friend begged that he might be shot instead of hanged, and Sir Peter, I’ll admit, granted him the favor. The poor fellow tied the handkerchief over his eyes himself, forgave all his enemies, and asked his friends to pay his debts. Zounds, ’twas the most affecting scene I ever witnessed.”

I plainly perceived that my companion was talking to frighten me, and showed it by thrusting my tongue into my cheek, which caused him to burst out laughing. He presently became grave, however, and assured me solemnly that a sea-officer had his choice of dressing handsomely, or being court-martialed and shot. “For,” said he, “the one hundred

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and forty-fourth regulation of the service reads, 'All of his Majesty's sea-officers are commanded to marry heiresses, and in these cases, the usual penalties for the abduction of heiresses are remitted'. Now, how can we abduct heiresses, or even get them to look at us, without fine clothes? Women, my boy, are caught by the eye alone — and I know 'em, by Gad!"

This trifling speech remained in my memory, and the day came when I recalled the idle talk of us two laughing midshipmen as prophetic.

We went together to a shop, where, under his direction and that of an oily-tongued shopman, I ordered one of the handsomest outfits any midshipman could possibly have, including two dozen of silk stockings, as my new-found friend informed me that every man on board his Majesty's ships, from the admiral down to the jack-o'-the-dust, always wore silk stockings, because in the event of being struck by a ball or a pike or a cutlass in action, the danger from inflammation was much less with silk than with cotton or wool.

All went swimmingly, until it was time to pay for the things. Then, I acknowledge, I

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

was at a loss. The shopman, suddenly changing his tone, cried out to my companion,—

“Mr. Giles Vernon, I remember the last reefer you brought here bought near a boat-load and paid with the foresail, as you gentlemen of the sea call it. I will not be done this time, I assure you.”

At this, Giles Vernon promptly drew his sword, which did not disturb the shopman in the least, as I found out afterward; young gentlemen of Giles' age and rank, in Portsmouth, drew their swords whenever they could not draw their purses. But I was very unhappy, not on Giles' account, but on that of the poor shopman, whom I expected to see weltering in his blood. After a wordy war, Giles left the shop, taking me with him, and menacing the shopman, in case the purchases I had ordered did not come aboard the *Ajax* that night.

I thought it wise to suggest that I should now go aboard, as it was well on to three o'clock. Giles agreed with me. I had forgotten to ask him what ship he was attached to, but it suddenly occurred to me that he, too,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

might be in the *Ajax*, and I asked him. Imagine my delight when he said yes.

“But if the admiral does not behave himself better,” he added, “and if the captain does not ask me to dinner oftener than he has been doing lately, I shall prefer charges against both of them. I have been assured by the lords in admiralty that any request of mine will be regarded as an order by them, and I shall request that Admiral Hawkshaw and Captain Guilford be relieved of their commands.”

By that time we had reached the water and there, stepping into a splendid, eight-oared barge, I saw Sir Peter Hawkshaw. He caught sight of us at the same moment, and the change in Giles Vernon’s manner was what might have been expected. He was even more modest and deferential than I, as we advanced.

“Here you are!” pleasantly cried the admiral to me. “You ran away so fast t’other day, that I had no chance to give you any directions, and I scarcely expected you to turn up to-day. However, I shall now take you to the ship. Mr. Vernon, I have room for you.”

“Thank you, sir,” responded Giles very

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

gratefully, "but I have a pressing engagement on shore — a matter of important business —" at which I saw the suspicion of a grin on the admiral's homely old face. He said little to me until we were in the great cabin of the *Ajax*. For myself, I can only say that I was so awed by the beauty, the majesty, the splendor of one of the finest ships of the line in the world, that I was dumb with delight and amazement. Once in the cabin, the admiral asked me about my means and my outfit. I burst out with the whole story of what occurred in the haberdasher's shop, at which Sir Peter looked very solemn, and lectured me upon the recklessness of my conduct in ordering things with no money to pay for them, and followed it up with an offer to fit me out handsomely. This I accepted with the utmost gratitude, and in a day or two I found myself established as one of his Majesty's midshipmen in the cockpit of the *Ajax*, and I began to see life.

II

My introduction into the cockpit of the *Ajax* was pretty much that of every other reefer in his Majesty's navy. I was, of course, told that I showed the most brazen presumption in daring to wish to enter the naval service; that I ought to be a choir boy at St. Paul's; that haymaking was my profession by nature, to say nothing of an exchange of black eyes and bloody noses with every midshipman of my size in the cockpit. Through all this Giles Vernon was my chief tormentor and best friend. He proclaimed the fact of my drysalting ancestry, and when I imprudently reminded him that I was the grandson of a baronet, he gave me one kick for the drysalter and two for the baronet. He showed me a battered old cocked hat hung up on a nail in the steerage country.

"Do you see that hat, you young rascal-lion?" he asked.

I replied that I did, and a shocking bad hat it was, too.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“That hat was once the property of that old pirate and bucaneer, Sir Peter Hawkshaw, Vice-Admiral of the White. It is named after him, and whenever his conduct displeases the junior officers on this ship,—which it generally does,—that hat, dear boy, is kicked and cursed as a proxy for your respected great-uncle. Now understand: your position in the cockpit is that of this hat. In fact, you will take the hat’s place,”—which I found to be true, and I was called to account every day for some part of the conduct of Admiral Hawkshaw, although I did not see him twice in the week.

Mr. Buxton, our first lieutenant, was a fine officer, and celebrated for licking midshipmen into shape; and if I learned my duty quickly, he, rather than I, deserves the credit.

My experience of other ships convinces me that the juniors in the *Ajax* were clever fellows; but Giles Vernon was undoubtedly the smartest officer among them and cock of the walk between decks. He had innumerable good qualities, but the beggarly virtue of prudence was not among them. He had, however, another virtue in a high degree,—a daring and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

invincible courage. That, and his smartness as an officer, made Mr. Buxton his friend, and caused many of his peccadilloes to be overlooked.

The fact that at nineteen Giles Vernon was still only a midshipman made me think that he was without fortune or influence; but I was soon enlightened on the subject, though not by him. He was the distant cousin and heir of Sir Thomas Vernon of Vernon Court, near York, and of Grosvenor Square, London. This man was generally spoken of as the wicked Sir Thomas, and a mortal hatred subsisted between him and his heir. Giles had been caught trying to induce the money sharks to take his post-obits; but as Sir Thomas was not yet fifty years of age, and it was quite possible that he should marry, the only result was to fan the flame of animosity between him and his heir, without Giles' getting a shilling. The next heir to Giles was another cousin, remote from both him and Sir Thomas, one Captain Philip Overton of the Guards, who was as much disliked by Sir Thomas as was Giles. Giles, who had been at sea since his twelfth year, knew little or nothing

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

of Captain Overton, although he swore many times in a month that he meant to marry the first woman who would take him, for the purpose of cutting off Overton's hopes; but it occurred to me, young as I was, that Giles was not the man to give up his liberty to the first woman who was willing to accept of it.

We were fitting for the Mediterranean, and the ship lay in the inner harbor at Portsmouth, waiting her turn to go in dry dock to be coppered. There was plenty for the seniors to do, but not much for the midshipmen at that particular time; and we had more runs on shore than usual. The rest of us were satisfied with Portsmouth, but Giles was always raving of London and the London playhouses.

Knowing how long I had lived in London, he said to me one day,—

“Were you ever at Drury Lane Theater, my lad?”

I said no, I had never been to the playhouse; and I blushed as I said it, not desiring my messmates to know that I had been brought up by Betty Green, a corporal's widow.

“Then, child,” he cried, whacking me on the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

back, "you have yet to live. Have you not seen Mistress Trenchard — the divine Sylvia — as *Roxana*, as *Lady Percy*, as *Violetta*? Oh, what a galaxy of parts! Oh, the divine creature!"

He threw himself across the mess-table at that, for we were in the cockpit at the time. I laughed, boylike, at his raptures, and he groaned loudly.

"Such a face and figure! Such a foot and ankle! Such a melting eye! Such a luscious voice!"

I own that this outburst did more to make me realize that Giles, after all, was but nineteen than anything that had gone before; for I knew that older men did not so rave.

"And," he cried wildly, "I can not see her before we sail. By Heaven, I *will* see her! 'Tis seventy-four miles between me and her angel face. It can be done in seven hours and twenty minutes. I can get twenty-four hours' leave — but not a word of this, you haymaking son of a farmer."

No sooner had Giles said this than with the determination to be known as a man of spirit (I was, as I said, but fourteen), I concluded I

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

would go to London, too. On the day that Giles Vernon got his twenty-four hours' leave, I also got the same. Mr. Buxton looked a little queer when I asked him for it, and said something about not allowing the midshipmen to leave Portsmouth; but I answered readily enough that I wished very much to go on a little expedition with Giles Vernon, which would last overnight. As the other midshipmen had been allowed similar liberty, I got my request; and next morning, as the Phœbus coach for London rolled out of the stables into the inner yard, I appeared. Giles Vernon was also on hand. His surprise was great when he saw me.

"You take a risk, my lad," he said.

"No more than you do," I replied stoutly. "And I, too, love a roguish eye and a blushing cheek, and mean to go to the playhouse with you to see Mistress Trenchard." At which Giles roared out one of his rich laughs, and cried,—

"Come along then, my infant Don Juan."

We got inside the coach, because it was far from unlikely that we might meet some of our own officers on the road, or even Sir Peter

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Hawkshaw himself, who traveled much between Portsmouth and the Admiralty. And had we been caught, there is little doubt that we should have been forced to right about face, in spite of the leave each one of us had in his pocket. So we made ourselves extremely small in a corner of the coach, and only ventured to peep out once, when we caught sight of Sir Peter Hawkshaw's traveling chaise going Londonwards, and Sir Peter himself lying back in it, reading a newspaper. After that, you may be sure we were very circumspect.

I noticed, however, the same thing in the coach that I had observed the first hour I set eyes on Giles Vernon — that every woman he met was his friend. There were some tradesmen's wives, a French hairdresser, and the usual assortment of women to be found in a public coach; and in half an hour Giles Vernon had said a pleasant word to every one of them, and basked in their smiles.

The day was in April, and was bright throughout; and the relays of horses were so excellent that we reached London at four in the afternoon, having left Portsmouth at nine in

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the morning. We went straight to a chop-house, for we were ravenously hungry.

“And now, Dicky boy,” said Giles to me, “keep a bright lookout for any of our men; and if you see one, cut your cable and run for it, and if we are separated, meet me at the White Horse Cellar at twelve o’clock to-night to take the midnight coach.”

By the time we had got our dinner, it was time to go to the play. We marched off, and made our way through the mob of footmen, and got seats for the pit; and when we went in, and I saw the playhouse lighted up and the boxes filled with beautiful creatures, I was near beside myself. Giles laughed at me, but that I did not mind.

I gaped about me until suddenly Giles gripped my arm, and whispered to me,—

“Don’t look to the left. There is a box with Peter Hawkshaw in it, and Polly, and two girls—one of them the greatest beauty I ever saw, though but a slip of a girl. If Peter or Polly sees us, Lord help us!”

I did not look around immediately, but the desire to have a glimpse of the adorable Lady

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Arabella made me steal a glance that way. She was very beautifully dressed, and though but little more than sixteen, such a vision of loveliness as fairly to rival reigning beauties of several seasons' standing. I own that I saw little Daphne sitting by Lady Arabella, but I noted her scarcely at all.

Nor could Giles keep his eyes off Lady Arabella; and I noticed that even when the divine Sylvia, as he called her, was on the stage, he was not strictly attentive to her, but rather sought that fateful box where so much beauty was enthroned.

The divine Sylvia was a delightful actress, I must admit, and in spite of being forty if she was a day, and though raddled with paint, she had something winning in her air and face, and I could understand her tremendous popularity with the young bloods.

Neither Sir Peter nor Polly, as Giles called her, showed any signs whatever of having recognized us in the large crowd in the pit, and we began to congratulate ourselves heartily. There was a seat next to us held by a gentleman's servant, and presently he gave way to a re-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

markably handsome young man of six or seven and twenty.

A few words passed between master and man, and then we knew that the handsome gentleman was Captain Philip Overton, of the Second Life Guards. Giles exchanged significant looks with me.

Captain Overton seated himself quietly, and, after a careless glance at the house, seemed to retire into his own thoughts, quite unmindful of the stage and what was going on upon it. I wondered why a man who seemed so little in harmony with his surroundings should take the trouble to come to the play.

But if Captain Overton were indifferent to all about him, one person, the young beauty in Lady Hawkshaw's box, was far from indifferent to him. Lady Arabella saw his entrance, and from that moment she was occupied in trying to obtain his attention. When at last he recognized her and bowed slightly, she flamed all over with color, and gave him as good an invitation as any man might want to come to her box. But Overton made no sign of any intention to go to her, and, when she finally seemed

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

to realize this, she became as indifferent to all about her as he was. Other persons came to the box and went during the play, but they got little heed from Lady Arabella. Little Daphne, although but a child, not yet in her teens, showed a lively interest in all that passed and behaved in a most young-ladyish way, much to my diversion. (I was all of two years older than she.)

As the play progressed, I saw that Giles was becoming more and more infatuated with the fledgling beauty, and he even whispered to me a suggestion that we present ourselves boldly at the door of the box. This I received with horror, fearing both Sir Peter and Lady Hawshaw. Indeed, I had not been able to shake off this fear of my great-uncle and aunt for a moment.

One's first night at the play is usually a magic dream, but mine was tempered with the dread of being caught on the spot, of being delayed in our return to Portsmouth, and the torment of seeing the adored of my heart quite absorbed in another man.

When the play was over, we sat still until



There was nothing for me to do but to walk along beside him. *Page 31*

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the Hawkshaw party had passed out, and then, more for the sake of bravado, I think, than inclination, Giles ran pell-mell to the stage door, where he made one of a mob of gentlemen to see the divine Sylvia to her chair. And, to my alarm, as soon as the lady was within and the curtain drawn, he tipped the wink to one of the chairmen, who silently gave up his place, and Giles, taking up the pole, trudged off, assisting to carry his portly mistress. There was nothing for me to do but to walk along beside him amid the rattle and roar of coaches, the shouting of the hackney coachmen, the pushing and jostling of chairmen and linkboys, and all the confusion that attends the emptying of a London playhouse. Mrs. Trenchard's door was not far away, and when she was put down, and Giles sneaked off, I observed the handsome Captain Overton standing at the turn of the street laughing at him. Giles, who was so timid in his love, was bold enough in his wrath, and stepping up to Overton said coolly:

“Sir, I perceive you are smiling. Who is the harlequin that amuses you, may I ask?”

“You, sir,” promptly answered Overton.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“You are too good,” responded Giles, “and I have before pinked my man in beauty’s quarrel,” — and then he slapped Overton in the mouth. The next thing I knew their two swords were flashing in the moonlight. I stood paralyzed with fear. Not so a couple of burly watchmen, who, running forward, clutched the offenders and dragged them apart.

But the two late enemies, making common cause against the watchmen, fought them off; and when the watchmen desisted from the fight to spring their rattles for assistance, both Giles and the officer ran down a dark alley, followed by me as fast as my short legs would carry me, and soon all three of us were huddled together in the porch of a church, some distance away from the scene of the fracas.

“Neatly done,” remarked Overton with a smile, to Giles. “I should have been in that brawny fellow’s clutches now, but for the clip over the head you gave him.”

“You did your share, sir,” politely responded Giles.

“But time presses and our affairs must be settled,” said Overton; “here is my card. It

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

is too dark to read it, but I am Captain Philip Overton, of the Second Life Guards."

"And I," replied Giles, "am Midshipman Giles Vernon, of the *Ajax*, ship of the line, now at Portsmouth."

By the dim light of a lantern in the church porch, I saw the expression of astonishment upon Overton's face.

"Then," he stammered, "we are related."

"Yes," replied Giles, smiling, "and if you pierce me through with sword or pistol, it will be worth one of the finest estates in the kingdom to you, provided always that old villain, Sir Thomas Vernon, does not marry and have children to spite us."

Overton reflected, half laughing and half frowning.

"If only you had not passed a blow! Anything else, there could be an accommodation for. It was most unfortunate."

"Yes, as it turns out," responded Giles; "but the question is, now, when and where can we meet?"

Just then the great bell of St. Paul's tolled out the half-hour before midnight, and I, who

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

had been an almost unobserved listener, spoke, out of the fullness of my heart.

“Giles,” said I, “the coach leaves at twelve. If we do not get to Portsmouth in time, we are deserters. Let Captain Overton write to you and fight afterward.”

“Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings comes wisdom,” replied Overton, smiling; and so in two minutes it was settled, Overton agreeing to come to Portsmouth to fight, if Giles could not get leave to meet him half-way between Portsmouth and London. We then bade him good-by, and ran off as fast as our legs could carry us, and barely made the coach.

We traveled all night, Giles sleeping soundly and snoring very loud, in one corner. I felt great uneasiness about the coming meeting between him and Overton, although I believed there was no hostile feeling between them. But when two men face each other with arms in their hands, there is always the possibility of awful catastrophe.

The roseate morning broke when we were still some distance from Portsmouth. The sight of the blooming hedge-rows, the bird-songs, and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

all the fair beauty of the morning made me long to be outside, and at the last stage — my companion still sleeping — I got out, and with a shilling to the coachman, got the box seat. There were only two or three persons, besides the guard, on the coach.

Once up there, I could not rest satisfied without handling the ribbons. I had never even driven a donkey in my life, but, nevertheless, I aspired to drive four fresh roadsters. The coachman, a good-natured, foolish fellow, gave me the reins, down a perfectly smooth lane. I seized the whip, too, and brought it down across the wheelers' backs, and, the next thing I knew, the coach was lying on its side on the road, and I was on the ground.

It was over in a wink, and it seemed scarcely longer before it had been righted; for the load was extremely light, and no one was hurt except Giles. He scrambled out of the coach window, his arm hanging down, not broken, but out of joint. I pointed to it.

“Your sword arm,” I said.

There was nothing for it but to make for Portsmouth as fast as possible. Giles was in

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

extreme pain; he said nothing, but great drops came out upon his forehead. When we reached the town, I at once put off in search of a surgeon, while Giles remained at the inn. I soon fetched the surgeon, who got the arm into place. When the man had finished, Giles asked when he could use his arm for pistol shooting.

“In a week, perhaps; possibly not for two weeks.” And the surgeon departed.

As soon as he was out of the room, Giles sent for pen and paper, and with the most painful effort, guiding his right hand by his left, managed to indite the following epistle to Captain Overton:

PHENIX INN, PORTSMOUTH, *Friday*.

“DEAR SIR:

“This is to inform you that I met with a most unfortnit axerdent while coming down on the coach. My friend and messmate, the infant admiral which you saw with me, had read the story of Gehu in the Bible or Homar, I forget which, and aspired to drive four horses. Which he did, with the result that my right arm was rentched out of place, and the rascally doctor who sett it says I cannot use it for some days. This is most unfortnit, as it delays the pleasure we antissipated in our meeting. You will here from me as soon as I am recovered. The only

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

thing which disturbs me is that if we both go to Davy Jones's, twill please that old curmudgin, Sir Thomas Vernon, bad luck to him. Believe me, sir,

“Your very obliged, and

“Most obedient servant,

“GILES VERNON,

“Mid. on H. M. S. *Ajax*.”

Giles gave me this to read, and I pointed out several mistakes he had made in spelling, although the tone of the letter was gentlemanlike, as everything was that Giles did. With great vexation and some difficulty, he added a post-script.

“P. S.—Please excuse spelling as my arm is very painful. G. V.”

At that moment a marine from the *Ajax* bounced, breathless and in great excitement, into the room.

“We are to sail with the tide, to-night, sir!” he said. “The admiral passed the messenger on the road; the jib is loose, and the blue peter flying,” — and out he ran, to notify the other absentees.

Giles seized the paper, and added laboriously:

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“P. S. No 2.—I am just enformed that the Blue Peter is flying from the *Ajax*, and that, my dear sir, signifies that we are about to sail. Our meeting must be postponed, for god knose when we will eat fresh butter again. *But you shall hear from me.* G. V.”

And that night we sailed with the tide.

III

We were ordered to join Sir John Jervis' fleet in the Mediterranean without the loss of a day, and, when the tide served at nine o'clock that night, Sir Peter Hawkshaw was ready for it. The officers, who knew Sir Peter's capacity for picking up his anchors at short notice, were generally prepared, and were but little surprised at the sudden departure of the ship. The men, however, are never prepared to go, and the ship was besieged, from the time she showed the blue peter until she set her topsails, by the usual crowd of bumboat women, sailors' wives, tavern-keepers, shop-dealers, and all the people with whom Jack trades, and who are loath to part with him for reasons of love or money. Although all of the stores were on board, there were market supplies to get, and the midshipmen were in the boats constantly until the last boat was hoisted in, just as the music called the men to the capstan bars. It was a brilliant moonlight night, a good breeze was blowing,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and the *Ajax* got under way with an unusual spread of sail. As we passed out the narrow entrance into the roads, the wind freshened and the great ship took her majestic way through the fleet, a mountain of canvas showing from rail to truck. The first few days I was overcome, as it were, with my new life and its duties. Two other midshipmen, junior to myself, had joined, so I was no longer the exclusive butt of the cockpit. We spent most of our spare time expressing the greatest longing for a meeting with the French, although for my own part, even while I was bragging the most, I felt a sickness at the heart when I imagined a round shot entering my vitals. Giles Vernon was still the dearest object of my admiration and affections — always excepting that divinely beautiful Lady Arabella. But this was rather the admiration of a glowworm for a star. I had no one else to love except Giles, and even a midshipman must love something.

I did not much trouble myself about that meeting, so far in the future, between Giles and Overton. Youth has no future, as it has no past.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Naturally, I did not see much of my great-uncle, the admiral. He was a very strict disciplinarian, probably because he was used to discipline at home, and busied himself more with the conduct of the ship than the captain liked. The other midshipmen alleged that there was no love lost between Captain Guilford and the admiral, and the captain had been heard to say that having an admiral on board was like having a mother-in-law in the house. Nevertheless, Sir Peter was a fine seaman, and the gun-room joke was that he knew how to command, from having learned how to obey under Lady Hawkshaw's iron rule.

One day the admiral's steward brought me a message. The admiral's compliments, and would I dine in the great cabin at five o'clock that day?

I was frightened out of a year's growth by the invitation, but of course I responded that I should be most happy. This, like my professed anxiety to meet the French, was a great lie. At five o'clock I presented myself, trembling in every limb. The first thing I noted in the cabin was a large portrait of Lady Hawk-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

shaw as a young woman. She must have been very handsome.

Sir Peter gave me two fingers, and turning to the steward, said, "Soup."

Soup was brought. We were mostly out of fresh vegetables then, and it was pea-soup, such as we had in the cockpit. Sir Peter grumbled a little at it, and it was soon removed and a leg of pork brought on; a pig had been killed that day.

"Aha!" sniffed Sir Peter delightedly. "This is fine. Nephew, you have no pig in the gun-room to-day."

Which was true; and Sir Peter helped me liberally, and proceeded to do the same by himself. The steward, however, said respectfully,—

"Excuse me, Sir Peter, but in the interview I had the honor to have with Lady Hawkshaw before sailing, sir, she particularly desired me to request you not to eat pork, as it always disagreed with you."

"Wh-wh-what!" roared Sir Peter.

"I am only repeating Lady Hawkshaw's message, sir," humbly responded the man; but I

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

thought I saw, under all his humility, a sly kind of defiance. Sir Peter had no fear of either round, grape, or double-headed shot, and was indifferent to musketry fire. Likewise, it was commonly said of him in the service that if he were ordered to attack hell itself, he would stand on until his jib caught fire; but neither time nor distance weakened the authority over him of Lady Hawkshaw.

Sir Peter glared at the steward and then at the leg of pork, and, suddenly jumping up, seized the dish and threw it, pork and all, out of the stern window. As I had secured my portion, I could view this with equanimity.

The next dish was spareribs. The steward said nothing, but Sir Peter let it pass with a groan. It seemed to me that everything appetizing in the dinner was passed by Sir Peter, in response to a peculiar kind of warning glance from the steward. This man, I heard afterward, had sailed with him many years, and was understood to be an emissary of Lady Hawkshaw's.

We had, besides the pea-soup and roast pork, spareribs, potatoes, turnips, anchovy with sauce,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and a custard. Sir Peter, however, dined off pea-soup and potatoes; but I observed that he was his own master as far as the decanters were concerned, and it occurred to me that he had made a trade with the steward, by which he was allowed this indulgence, as I noticed the man turned his back every time Sir Peter filled his glass.

Dinner being over, the cloth removed, and the steward gone, Sir Peter appeared to be in a somewhat better humor. His first remark was,—

“So you are fond of the play, sir?”

I replied that I had been but once.

“The time you went with Giles Vernon. If the coach had broken down between London and Portsmouth, we should have sailed without either one of you.”

I did not mention that the coach had upset, but merely said that we thought there was no danger of any detention, and that Giles Vernon was in no way responsible for my going to London, as he knew nothing about it until we met at the coach door.

I was revolving in my mind whether I could



CLARENCE J. UNDERWOOD

He turned his back every time Sir Peter filled his glass. *Page 44*

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

venture to ask of the welfare of the divine Arabella, and suddenly a direct inspiration came to me. I remarked — with blushes and tremors, I must admit,—

“How very like Lady Arabella Stormont must Lady Hawkshaw have been at her age! And Lady Arabella is a very beautiful young lady.”

Sir Peter grinned like a rat-trap at this awkward compliment, and remarked,—

“Yes, yes, Arabella is like my lady, except not half so handsome. Egad, when I married Lady Hawkshaw, I had to cut my way, literally with my sword, through the body-guard of gentlemen who wanted her. And as for her relations — well, she defied 'em, that's all.”

I tried, with all the little art I possessed, to get some information concerning Arabella out of Sir Peter; but beyond telling me what I knew before,—that she was his great-niece on the other side of the house and first cousin to Daphne, and that her father, now dead, was a scamp and a pauper, in spite of being an earl, — he told me nothing. But even that seemed to show the great gulf between us. Would she,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

with her beauty and her title, condescend to a midshipman somewhat younger than herself, and penniless? I doubted it, though I was, in general, of a sanguine nature.

I found Sir Peter unbent as the decanters grew empty, although I would not for a moment imply that he was excessive in his drinking. Only, the mellow glow which pervades an English gentleman after a few glasses of good port enveloped him. He asked me if I was glad I had joined the service,— to which I could say yes with great sincerity; impressed upon me my good fortune in getting in a ship of the line in the beginning, and gave me some admirable advice. I left him with a feeling that I had a friend in that excellent seaman, honest gentleman, and odd fish, Admiral Sir Peter Hawkshaw.

When I went below, I told my messmates all that had occurred, rather exaggerating Sir Peter's attentions to me, as midshipmen will. Then privately I confided to Giles Vernon. I told what little I had found out concerning the star of my soul, as I called Arabella, to which Giles responded by a long-drawn-out "Ph-ew!"

I implored him, if he knew any officer in the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

ship who would be likely to be acquainted with Lady Arabella, to pump him for me. This he promised; and the very next day, as I sat on a locker, studying my theorems, Giles came up.

“Dicky,” said he, “Mr. Buxton knows the divine Arabella. She has a fortune of thirty thousand pounds, and so has the dove-eyed little Daphne, all inherited from their granddad, a rich Bombay merchant. It seems that Lady Arabella’s mother bought a coronet with her money, and it turned out a poor bargain. However, the earl did not live long enough to ruin his father-in-law; and little Daphne’s parents, too, died young, so the old Bombay man left the girls his fortune, and made Sir Peter their guardian, and that means, of course, that Polly Hawkshaw is their guardian. Mr. Buxton says he would like to see the fortune-hunter who can rob Polly of those two damsels. For Polly says rank and lineage are not everything. She herself, you know, dates back to the Saxon Heptarchy, though she did marry the son of your drysalting great-grandfather. And she wants those girls to marry *men*; and what Polly says on that score is to be respected, considering

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

that she married into a drysalting family to please herself, or to displease her relations, I don't know which. I should say, though, if you are honest and deserving, and mind your book, and get a good word from the chaplain, you will probably one day be the husband of little Daphne, but not of Lady Arabella; no man shall marry her while I live, that you may be sure of; but when I marry her, you may be side-boy at my wedding."

I thought this speech very cruel of Giles Vernon, and believed that he did not know what true love was, else he could not so trifle with my feelings, although there was an echo of earnestness in his intimation that he would kill any man who aspired to marry Lady Arabella.

We were three weeks in the Bay of Biscay, thrashing to windward under topgallant-sails, and expecting daily and hourly to run across a Frenchman. We were hoping for it, because we found the *Ajax* to be a very weatherly ship and fast for her class; and both Captain Guilford and Sir Peter, who had sailed in her before, knew exactly how to handle her. And we were to have our wish. For, one evening

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

toward sunset, we sighted a French ship of the line off our beam; and by the time we had made her out, a light French frigate was coming down the wind, and in an hour we were at it hammer and tongs with both of them.

The Frenchmen thought they had us. We heard afterward that a prize crew was already told off to take us into Corunna, but no man or boy on the *Ajax* dreamed of giving up the ship.

The *Ajax* was cleared for action in eleven minutes; and, with four ensigns flying, we headed for the ship of the line, which was waiting for us, with her topsails shivering. The *Ajax* had been lately coppered, and, with all sail to royals set, legged it at a lively gait, in spite of the heavy sea, which occasionally caused our lower-deck guns to roll their noses in the water. As we wallowed toward the ship of the line, which was the *Indomptable*, the frigate, the *Xantippe*, was manœuvring for a position on our starboard quarter to rake us. Seeing this, the *Ajax* came up a little into the wind, which brought our broadside to bear directly on the *Xantippe*, and she hedged off a little.

The steadiness, coolness, and precision with

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

which the ship was handled astonished my young mind. I knew very well that if we were defeated, Sir Peter Hawkshaw would stand no show of leniency, for there was no doubt that, owing to our new copper, we could easily have outsailed the Frenchmen; but Sir Peter preferred to outfight them, even against desperate odds.

The officers and men had entire confidence in Sir Peter and in the ship, and went into action with the heartiest good-will imaginable. The people were amused by two powder monkeys coming to blows in the magazine passage over which one would be entitled to the larger share of prize-money. The gaiety of the men was contagious. Every man's face wore a grin; and when the word was given to take in the royals, and send down the yards, furl all staysails and the flying jib, they literally rushed into the rigging with an "Aye, aye, sir," that seemed to shake the deck.

The admiral, who had been on the bridge, left it and went below. Presently he came up. He was in his best uniform, with a gold-hilted sword, his order of the Bath on his breast, and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

he wore a cocked hat. As he passed me, Mr. Buxton, who was stepping along briskly, said,—

“Pardon me, Sir Peter, but a French musket wants no better target than a cocked hat.”

“Sir,” replied Sir Peter, “I have always fought in a cocked hat and silk stockings, as becomes a gentleman; and I shall always fight in a cocked hat and silk stockings, damme!”

Mr. Buxton passed on, laughing.

Now, I had taken the opportunity, after we had sighted the Frenchman, to run below and put on my newest uniform, with silk stockings, and to get out several cambric pocket handkerchiefs; and I had also scented myself liberally with some attar of rose, which I had bought in Portsmouth. Sir Peter, putting his fingers to his nose, sniffed the attar of rose, and, speedily identifying me, he surveyed me calmly all over, while I blushed and found myself unable to stand still under his searching gaze. When he spoke, however, it was in words of praise.

“Nephew, you have the right idea. It is a holiday when we meet the enemy, and officers should dress accordingly.”

Mr. Buxton, who was standing near, sneaked

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

off a little. He had on an old coat, such as I had never seen him wear, and had removed his stock and tied a red silk handkerchief around his neck. He certainly did not look quite the gentleman. The *Indomptable*, being then about half a mile distant, bore up and fired a shot to windward, which was an invitation to come on and take a licking or give one. The *Ajax* was not misled into the rashness of coming on, with the *Xantippe* hanging on her quarter, but, luffing up suddenly,—for she answered her helm beautifully,—she brought the frigate directly under her guns; and that fetched the *Indomptable* as fast as she could trot. The *Ajax* opened the ball with one of her long twenty-fours, Sir Peter himself sighting and pointing the gun; and immediately after the whole broadside roared out. Had it struck the frigate full, it would have sent her to the bottom; but by hauling quickly by the wind, she only received about half the discharge. That, however, was terrible. Her mizzenmast was cut off, and hung over her side in a mass of torn rigging; her mainmast was wounded; and it was plain that our broadside had killed and wounded

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

many men, and had dismounted several guns. Her wheel, however, was uninjured, and in an inconceivably short time the wreck of the mast had been cut away; and wearing, with the wind in her favor, she got into a raking position on our port quarter, and gave us a broadside that raked us from stern to stem.

The savage which dwells in man had made me perfectly indifferent to the loss of life on the French ship; but when a man dropped dead at my side, I fell into a passion of rage, and, I must honestly admit, of fear. My station was amidships, and I recalled, with a dreadful sinking of the heart, that it was commonly known as the slaughter-house, from the execution generally done there.

I looked down and saw the man's blood soaking into the sand, with which the deck was plentifully strewed, and I, Richard Glyn, longed to desert my station and run below. But as I turned, I caught sight of Giles Vernon, a little distance away from me. He was smiling and waving his hat, and he cried out,—

“See, boys! the big 'un is coming to take her punishment! Huzza!”

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

The *Indomptable* had then approached to within a quarter of a mile, and as a heavy sea was kicked up by the wind, and all three of the ships were rolling extremely, she luffed up to deliver her broadside; and at that moment three thundering cheers broke from the nine hundred throats on the *Ajax*, and they were instantly answered by a cheer as great from the Frenchman. Owing to the sharp roll, most of the French shot went a little too high, just above the heads of the marines, who were drawn up in the waist of the ship. My paroxysm of fear still held me, but when I saw these men, with the one proud word "Gibraltar" written on their hats, standing steadily, as if at parade, in the midst of the hurricane of fire, the men as cool as their officers, shame seized me for my cowardice; from that on, I gradually mastered my alarms. I here mention a strange thing: as long as I was a coward at heart, I was also a villain; for if one single shot could have sent the Frenchman's body to the sea and his soul to hell, I would have fired that shot. But when I was released from the nightmare of fear, a feeling of mercy stole into my soul.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I began to feel for our brave enemy and to wish that we might capture him with as little loss as possible.

The cannonade now increased; but the wind, which is usually deadened, continued to rise, and both the heavy ships were almost rolling their yard-arms in the water. The *Indomptable's* fire was exceedingly steady, but not well directed, while, after ten minutes of a close fire, it was seen that we were fast shooting her spars out of her. The frigate, much disabled by the loss of her mast, had fallen off to leeward, and never got close enough again to be of any assistance to her consort.

The *Ajax's* people began to clamor to get alongside, and alongside we got. As we neared the *Indomptable*, occasionally yawing to prevent being raked, his metal began to tell, and we were much cut up aloft, besides having been hulled repeatedly; but we came on steadily. The man at the wheel had nearly all his clothes torn off him by a splinter, but with the spirit of a true seaman, he stood at his post unflinchingly, never letting go of the spokes for one moment. When we were within a couple of pistol-shot, the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Frenchman opened a smart musketry fire. Sir Peter had left the bridge for a moment and was crossing the deck, when a ball went through his hat, knocking it off and tearing it to pieces. He stooped down, picked it up, and then called out to a powder boy who was passing.

“Go to my cabin, and in the upper drawer of the locker to the left of my bed-place, you will see two cocked hats; bring me the newest one. Hanged if I’ll not wear a decent hat, in spite of the Frenchman!”

And this man was ruled by his wife!

We hove to about a cable’s length from the Frenchman, and then the fight began in earnest. We were so near that every shot told. The Frenchman made great play with his main-deck battery, and our sails and rigging soon were so cut up, that when we came foul, a few minutes later, we were jammed fast; but nobody on either ship wished it otherwise. The Frenchman’s main-yard swung directly over our poop, and Captain Guilford himself made it fast to our mizzen rigging. The Frenchman, however, was not yet beaten at the guns, and the firing was so heavy on both sides that a pall of smoke

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

enveloped both ships. This was to our advantage, for the frigate, having got some sail on the stump of her mizzenmast, now approached; but the wind drifted the smoke so between her and the two fighting ships, that she could not in the dim twilight plainly discern friend from foe, especially as both were painted black, and we swung together with the sea and wind. When the smoke drifted off, the gallant but unfortunate *Xantippe* found herself directly under our broadside. We gave her one round from our main battery, and she troubled us no more.

Of my own feelings, I can only say that I welcomed the return of my courage so rapturously, I felt capable of heroic things. Occasionally I recognized Sir Peter as he flitted past; he seemed everywhere at once, and I perceived that although Captain Guilford was technically fighting the ship, Sir Peter was by no means an idle spectator. My gun was on the engaged side all the time, and several of the guns on that side became disabled, and officers were wounded or killed; it brought Giles Vernon quite close to me. Through the smoke and the fast-falling darkness, lighted only by the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

red flash of the guns and the glare of the battle lanterns, I could see his face. He never lost his smile, and his ringing voice always led the cheering.

Presently, the Frenchman's fire slackened, and then a dull, rumbling sound was heard in the depths of the *Indomptable*, followed by a roar and streams of light from the fore-hatch. The forward magazine had exploded, and it seemed in the awful crash and blaze as if all the masts and spars went skyward, with the rags of the sails; and a solemn hush and silence followed the explosion.

In another instant I heard Sir Peter's sharp voice shouting,—

“Call all hands to board! Boatswain, cheer the men up with the pipe!”

And then the clear notes of the boatswain's pipe floated out into the darkness, and with a yell the men gathered at the bulwarks. On the French ship they appeared to be dazed by the explosion, and we could see only a few officers running about and trying to collect the men.

In another instant I saw Mr. Buxton leap upon the hammock-netting, and about to spring,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

when a figure behind him seized him by the coat-tails, and, dragging him backward, he measured his length on the deck. The figure was Giles Vernon.

"After me," he cried to the first lieutenant; and the next moment he made his spring, and landed, the first man on the *Indomptable's* deck.

As soon as the ship was given up, we hauled up our courses and ran off a little, rove new braces, and made ready to capture the frigate, which, although badly cut up, showed no disposition to surrender, and stood gallantly by her consort. In half an hour we were ready to go into action again, if necessary, with another ship of the line.

We got within range,—the sea had gone down much,—and giving the *Xantippe* our broadside, brought down the tricolor which the Frenchmen had nailed to the stump of the mizzenmast. She proved to have on board near a million sterling, which, with the *Indomptable*, was the richest prize taken in for years preceding.

The admiral and captain got eleven thousand pounds sterling each. The senior officers re-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

ceived two thousand five hundred pounds sterling each. The juniors got two thousand pounds sterling, the midshipmen and petty officers one thousand five hundred pounds sterling, and every seaman got seven hundred pounds sterling, and the landsmen and boys four hundred pounds sterling in prize-money. And I say it with diffidence, we got much more in glory ; for the two French ships were not only beaten, but beaten in the most seamanlike manner. Sir Peter ever after kept the anniversary as his day of glory, putting on the same uniform and cocked hat he had worn, and going to church, if on shore, with Lady Hawkshaw on his arm, and giving thanks in a loud voice.

IV

We took the *Xantippe* home — the *Indomptable* went to the bottom of the Bay of Biscay — but before our prize-money was settled up, we were off again; Sir Peter dearly loved cruising in blue water. It was near two years before we got back to England to spend that prize-money; for, except the captain and Mr. Buxton and some of the married officers, I know of no one who saved any. Sir Peter, I understood afterward, spent much of his in a diamond necklace and tiara for Lady Hawkshaw, in which he was most egregiously cheated by a Portuguese money-lender, and the balance he put into a scheme for acclimating elephants in England, which was to make him as rich as Cræsus; but he lost a thousand pounds on the venture, besides his prize-money. In those two years I grew more and more fond of Giles Vernon. We generally contrived to have our watch together, and we were intimate as only shipmates could be. He talked much of what he meant to do

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

when he got ashore with money to spend, and assured me he had never had above twenty pounds of his own in his life. In the course of many nights spent in standing watch together, when the old *Ajax* was sailing like a witch,—for she was a capital sailer at that time,—he told me much about his early youth, and I confided to him the story of Betty Green. Giles' career had been the common one of the younger branches of a good family. His father had been a clergyman, and, dying, left several daughters, who married respectably, and this one son, who was put in the sea-service very young. At that time, several lives stood between Giles and the title and estates of Sir Thomas Vernon, and other lives stood between Giles and Overton; but those had passed away, leaving these two distant kinsmen as heirs to a man that seemed rightfully to have earned his title of "wicked Sir Thomas." I asked Giles if he knew why Sir Thomas, who so cordially hated his heirs, had never married. Giles replied that Sir Thomas showed no inclination to marry until he was near forty. Then his reputation was so well established that he was gen-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

erally looked askant upon; his character for truth was bad and at cards was worse. But he had induced a lady of rank and wealth to become engaged to be married to him. His treatment of her was so infamous that her whole family had declared war against him, and had succeeded in breaking off several very desirable alliances he would have liked to make. Of course a man of his rank and wealth could find some woman — alas! — to take him; but Sir Thomas was bent on money, with an inclination toward rank, and was the last man on earth to marry unless he had a substantial inducement; and several more years had passed without his being able to effect the sort of marriage he desired. Meanwhile, his health had broken down, and he was now a shattered man and prey for the doctors. All this was very interesting to me, especially as Sir Thomas' two heirs would one day have the experience of shooting at each other, and possibly deciding the matter of heirship by the elimination of one or the other from the question.

We both got promotion, of course, and that brought us into the gun-room; but we were as

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

intimate there as in our reefer days in the cockpit. On a glorious October morning in 1799, our anchor kissed the ground in Portsmouth harbor.

When we reached Portsmouth, the news of our good fortune had preceded us, and we were welcomed with open arms by men, women, and children — especially the women. All the prize-money brought back by any single ship during the war was insignificant compared with ours. The men were seized with a kind of madness for spending their money. The spectacle of an ordinary seaman parading the streets of Portsmouth with a gold-laced hat, a gold-headed stick, and watches and jewelry hung all over him was common enough, and he was sure to be an *Ajax* man. Sad to say, the pimps, and the worst class of men and women soon got the money away from our poor fellows.

The officers, in their way, were but little behind the men in their lavishness. Champagne was their common drink, and several of them invested in coaches! — the last thing they would ever have a chance of using.

Giles Vernon, although the most wasteful and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

profuse man I ever saw, desired to spend his money in London, Portsmouth being too small a theater for him. But the pressing affair of the satisfaction he owed Captain Overton had to be settled. After much hard thinking, Giles came to me on the day after we reached Portsmouth, and said,—

“ Dicky boy, read this letter and give me your opinion of it.”

This was the letter,—

“ H.M.S. *Ajax*, May 17, 1799.

“ CAPTAIN PHILIP OVERTON:

“ *Dear Sir.*—This is to inform you that I have reached Portsmouth, after a very successful cruise in the *Ajax*, when we took the *Indomptable* and the *Xantippe* and a large sum in specie. My shair is considerable—more money in short than I ever saw, much less handled, in my life. I would like a month in London to spend this money before offering my carkass to be made full of holes by you. Dear sir, consider. If I escape your marksmanship, the month more or less will be of little account; and if I fall, I shall miss the finest chance of seeing the world I ever had in my life. I think, sir, with diffidence I say it, that my record in the *Ajax* is enough to make plain I am not shurking the satisfaction I owe you, but I would take it as a personal favor if you would put it off

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

to this day month, when I will be in London. And as I shall eat and drink of the best, 'tis ten to one I will be much fater and therefore be a much better mark for you. I am, dear sir,

“Your obliged and

“Obedient servant,

“GILES VERNON.”

I pointed out to Giles that, although the tone of the letter was quite correct, the writing and spelling were scarce up to the standard — I was more bookish than Giles. But he replied with some heat,—

“Who, while reading the communication of a gentleman, will be so base as to sneer at the grammar or spelling?” So the letter went as it was, and in reply came a very handsome, well-expressed letter from Captain Overton, not only agreeing to postpone it a month, but for six weeks, which pleased Giles mightily. I wish to say, although Giles was inexpert with the pen, he had no lack of either polish or ideas, and was as fine an officer as ever walked the deck.

The matter with Overton finally settled, and the ship being paid off, Giles and I started for London, as happy as two youngsters could be, with liberty and two thousand pounds apiece to

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

spend, for I acknowledge that I had no more thought of saving than Giles. We took a chaise and four to London — no stage-coach for us! — and reached there in a day. We had planned to take the finest rooms at Mivart's Hotel, but fate and Lady Hawkshaw prevented me from enjoying them except for the first night of our arrival. Next morning on presenting myself at the Admiralty to ask for letters,— never dreaming I should have any,— I received one from Sir Peter Hawkshaw, which read,—

“GRAND-NEPHEW.—My Lady Hawkshaw desires that you will come and bring your money with you to our house in Berkeley Square, and remain there.

“Yours, etc.,

“P. HAWKSHAW, C.B.”

Great was my distress when I got this letter, as I foresaw there would not be much chance under Lady Hawkshaw's eagle eye of seeing the kind of life I wished to see. And I was obliged to go, for Sir Peter was the only person on earth likely to interest himself at the Admiralty for me; and I might stay and wither on shore

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

while others more fortunate got ships, if I antagonized him. And when Lady Hawkshaw commanded, there was but one thing to do, and that was to obey.

So, with a heavy heart, I took myself and my portmanteau and, in a canvas bag, my two thousand guineas to the admiral's great fine house in Berkeley Square. My parting with Giles was melancholy enough; for, with the womanish jealousy of a boy, I was unhappy to think he would be enjoying himself with some one else, while I was suffering the hardship of having my money taken care of for me.

Giles had no more forgotten the Lady Arabella than I had, and, on reading this note, exclaimed,—

“Zounds! I wish Peter and Polly had sent for me to stay in Berkeley Square, with that divine creature under the same roof. Do you think, Dicky, we could exchange identities, so to speak?” But on my reminding him that Lady Hawkshaw had demanded my prize-money, and would certainly get it, his ardor to stand in my shoes somewhat abated.

When I reached Sir Peter's house about noon,



The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the same tall and insolent footman that I had seen on my first visit opened the door for me. Lady Hawkshaw, wearing the same black velvet gown and the identical feathers, received me, and sitting with her were Daphne Carmichael and the glorious, the beautiful, the enchanting Lady Arabella Stormont.

If I had fallen madly in love with her when I was but fourteen, and had only seven and sixpence, one may imagine where I found myself when I was near seventeen, and had two thousand pounds in a bag in my hands. Lady Hawkshaw's greeting was stiff, but far from unkind; and she introduced me to the young ladies, who curtsied most beautifully to me, and, I may say, looked at me not unkindly.

"Is that your prize-money in that bag, Richard?" asked Lady Hawkshaw immediately.

I replied it was.

"Jeames," she said, "go and make my compliments to Sir Peter, and say to him that if he has nothing better to do, I would be glad to see him at once. And order the coach."

James departed.

I sat in adoring silence, oblivious of Daphne,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

but gazing at Lady Arabella until she exclaimed pettishly,—

“La! Have I got a cross-eye or a crooked nose, Mr. Richard, that you can’t take your eyes off me?”

“You have neither,” I replied gallantly. “And my name is not Mr. Richard, but Mr. Glyn, at your ladyship’s service.”

“Arabella,” said Lady Hawkshaw in a voice of thunder, “be more particular in your address to young gentlemen.”

“Oh, yes, ma’am!” pertly replied Lady Arabella. “But such *very* young gentlemen, like Mr. Glyn, or Mr. Thin, or whatever his name may be, are always difficult to please in the way of address. If you are familiar, they are affronted; and if you are reserved, they think you are making game of them.”

By this speech I discovered that although Lady Hawkshaw might rule her world, terrorize Sir Peter, and make the Lords of the Admiralty her humble servitors, she had one rebel in the camp, and that was Lady Arabella Stormont. I saw that her remarks displeased Lady Hawkshaw, but she endured them in silence. Who,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

though, would not endure anything from that cherub mouth and those dazzling eyes?

Sir Peter now appeared and greeted me.

“Sir Peter,” said Lady Hawkshaw in her usual authoritative manner, “you will go in the coach with me to the bank, with Richard Glyn, to deposit his money. You will be ready in ten minutes, when the coach will be at the door.”

“I will go with you, Madam,” replied Sir Peter; “but I shall order my horse, and ride a-horseback, because I do not like riding in that damned stuffy coach. And besides, when you and your feathers get in, there is no room for me.”

“You ride a-horseback!” sniffed Lady Hawkshaw. “Even the grooms and stable boys laugh at you. You are always talking some sea nonsense about keeping the horse’s head to the wind, and yawing and luffing and bowsing at the bowline, and what not; and besides, I am afraid to trust you since Brown Jane threw you in the Park.”

It ended by Sir Peter’s going in the coach, where the little man lay back in the corner, nearly smothered by Lady Hawkshaw’s volumi-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

nous robe, and pishing and pshawing the whole way.

But I was quite happy,—albeit I was the victim of Lady Hawkshaw in having my money kept for me,—for on the seat beside me was Lady Arabella, who chose to go with us. She made much game of me, but I had the spirit to answer her back. After placing the money, we took an airing in the park, and then returned to dinner at five o'clock. I neither knew nor cared what became of Daphne; for was I not with the adored Lady Arabella?

That night Lady Hawkshaw was at home, and I had my first experience of a London rout. The card-tables were set on the lower floor, for although Lady Hawkshaw hated cards, yet it was commonly said that no one could entertain company in London without them.

And that night I made a strange and terrible discovery. Lady Arabella was a gamester of the most desperate character, in ready money, as far as her allowance as a minor permitted, and in promises to pay, when she came into her fortune, as far as such promises would be accepted. But they were not much favored by

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the gentlemen and ladies who played with her; for the chances of her marrying before her majority were so great, that her I O U's were not considered of much value, and found few takers, even when accompanied by Lady Arabella's most brilliant smiles; for your true gamester is impervious to smiles or frowns, insensible to beauty — in short, all his faculties are concentrated on the odd trick.

A great mob of fine people came and there was a supper, and many wax lights, and all the accessories of a fashionable rout. I wandered about, knowing no one, but observant of all. I noticed that a very clever device was hit upon by Lady Arabella and others who liked high play, which Lady Hawkshaw disliked very much. The stakes were nominally very small, but in reality they were very large, shillings actually signifying pounds. All of the people who practised this were in one of the lower rooms, while Sir Peter, who was allowed to play six-penny whist, and those who in good faith observed Lady Hawkshaw's wishes, were in a room to themselves. I must not forget to mention, among the notable things at this rout, Lady

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Hawkshaw's turban. It was a construction of feathers, flowers, beads, and every other species of ornament, the whole capped with the celebrated tiara which had been bought from the Portuguese, and the diamond necklace beamed upon her black velvet bosom. Sir Peter seemed quite enchanted with her appearance, as she loomed a head taller than any woman in the rooms, and evidently considered her a combination of Venus and Minerva — not that the pair ceased squabbling on that account. I think they disagreed violently on every detail of the party, and Sir Peter was routed at every point.

Among those who did not play was Daphne, then quite as tall as I and well on into her sixteenth year. I could not but acknowledge her to be a pretty slip of a girl, and we sat in a corner and I told her about our bloody doings on the *Ajax*, until she stopped her ears and begged me to desist. I regarded Daphne with condescension, then; but I perceived that she was sharp of wit and nimble of tongue, much more so than her cousin, Lady Arabella.

After a while I left Daphne and went back to watch Lady Arabella. I soon saw that she

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

was a very poor player, and lost continually; but that only whetted her appetite for the game. Presently a gentleman entered, and, walking about listlessly, although he seemed to be known to everybody present, approached me. It was Captain Overton, as handsome, as *distract*, as on the first and only time I had seen him.

Much to my surprise, he recognized me and came up and spoke to me, making me a very handsome compliment upon the performances of the *Ajax*.

"And is my cousin, Mr. Vernon, here to-night?" he asked, smiling.

I replied I supposed not; he had received no card when we had parted that morning, and I knew of none since.

"I shall be very glad to meet him," said Overton. "I think him a fine fellow, in spite of our disagreement. I see you are not playing."

"I have no taste for play, strange to say."

"Do not try to acquire it," he said; "it is wrong, you may depend upon it; but indulgence in it makes many believe it to be right. Every time you look at a sin, it gets better looking."

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I was surprised to hear sin mentioned in the society of such elegant and well-bred sinners as I saw around me, who never alluded to it, except officially, as it were, on Sunday, when they all declared themselves miserable sinners — for that occasion only. Overton then sauntered over toward Lady Arabella, who seemed to recognize his approach by instinct. She turned to him, her cards in her hands, and flushed deeply; he gazed at her sternly as if in reproof, and, after a slight remark or two, moved off, to her evident chagrin.

Daphne being near me then, I said to her with a forced laugh,—

“What is the meaning, I beg you to tell me, of the pantomime between Lady Arabella and Captain Overton?”

Daphne hesitated, and then said,—

“Captain Overton was one of the gayest men about London until a year or two ago. Since then, it is said, he has turned Methody. It is believed he goes to Mr. Wesley’s meetings, although he has never been actually caught there. He lives plainly, and, some say, he gives his means to the poor; he will not go to the races

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

any more, nor play, and he does not like to see Arabella play."

"What has he to do with Arabella?"

"Nothing that I know of, except that she likes him. He does not like to see any one play now, although he gamed very high himself at one time."

I had seen no particular marks of interest on Overton's part toward Lady Arabella; but, watching her, I saw, in a very little while, the deepest sort of interest on her part toward him. She even left the card-table for him, and kept fast hold of him. I recalled the way she had striven to attract his attention at the play that night, more than two years before, and my jealous soul was illuminated with the knowledge that she was infatuated with Overton — and I was right.

Some time afterward, whom should I see walking in but Giles Vernon! Lady Hawkshaw received him most graciously. I went up to him and asked, "How came you here?"

"Did you think, Dicky, that I meant to let you keep up a close blockade of the lovely Arabella? No, indeed; I got a card at seven o'clock

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

this evening, by working all day for it, and I mean to reconnoiter the ground as well as you."

I thought when he saw Lady Arabella with Overton that even Giles Vernon's assurance would scarcely be equal to accosting her. He marched himself up with all the coolness in the world, claiming kinship boldly with Overton, who couldn't forbear smiling, and immediately began to try for favor in Arabella's eyes.

But here I saw what I never did before or since with Giles Vernon — a woman who was utterly indifferent to him, and actually seemed to dislike him. She scarcely noticed him at first, and, when he would not be rebuffed, was so saucy to him that I wondered he stood it for a minute. But stand it he did, with the evident determination to conquer her indifference or dislike, whichever it might be.

Overton seized the excuse of Giles' approach to escape, and left the house, which did not cause Lady Arabella to like Giles any better. She returned to the card-table, Giles with her, and, by the exercise of the most exquisite ingenuity, he managed to lose some money to her, which somewhat restored her good humor.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

At last the rout was over, and, soon after midnight, all had gone. I was shown to a bedroom, with only a partition wall between me and Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw; so I had the benefit of the nightly lecture Lady Hawkshaw gave Sir Peter, with the most unfailing regularity. On this particular night, they came nearer agreeing than usual, both of them discussing anxiously Lady Arabella's marked fondness for play. And Lady Hawkshaw told of a late escapade of Lady Arabella's in which a certain ace of clubs was played by her; the said ace of clubs being fashioned out of black court-plaster and white cardboard. When detected, Lady Arabella professed to think the whole thing a joke, but as her adversary at the time was a very old lady whose eyesight was notoriously defective, it took all of Lady Arabella's wit and youth to carry it off successfully, which, however, she did. As for her trinkets, Lady Arabella was always buying them, and always taking a distaste to them, so she alleged, and Lady Hawkshaw suspected they took the place of shillings at the card-table. Sir Peter groaned at this, and remarked that the earl, her

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

father, was the worst gamester he ever knew, except her grandfather. I do not remember any more. I tried to avoid hearing what they were saying, but every word was distinctly audible to me, until, at this point, I fell asleep and dreamed that Lady Hawkshaw was appointed to command the *Ajax*, and I was to report on board next day.

V

I spent several weeks in Sir Peter's house, and strange weeks they were in many respects. I never had the least complaint to make of the kindness of Sir Peter or Lady Hawkshaw, except that Lady Hawkshaw insisted on investing my money, all except ten pounds which she gave me, charging me to be careful with it; but Sir Peter secretly lent me a considerable sum, to be repaid at my majority.

Sir Peter was actively at war with all the women-folk in the household, from his lady down, except little Daphne. He assumed to conduct everything in a large town house in Berkeley Square exactly as if he were on the *Ajax*, seventy-four. He desired to have the lazy London servants called promptly at two bells, five o'clock in the morning, and to put them to holystoning, squilgeeing, and swabbing off the decks, as he called it. Of course the servants rebelled, and Sir Peter denounced them as mutineers, and would have dearly liked to put

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

them all in double irons. He divided the scullions and chambermaids into watches, and when they laughed in his face, threatened them with the articles of war. He wished everything in the house stowed away in the least compass possible, and when Lady Hawkshaw had her routs, Sir Peter, watch in hand, superintended the removal of the furniture from the reception-rooms, which he called clearing for action, and discharged any servant who was not smart at his duty. He had a room, which he called his study, fitted up with all the odds and ends he had collected during forty years in the navy, and here he held what might be called drum-head courts-martial, and disgraced the domestic staff, fined them, swore at them, and bitterly regretted that the land law did not admit of any proper discipline whatever.

It may be imagined what a scene of discord this created, although Sir Peter was of so kind and generous a nature that the servants took more from him than from most masters, and, indeed, rather diverted themselves with his fines and punishments, and, when dismissed, declined to leave his service, much to his wrath and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

chagrin. The acme was reached when he attempted to put the cook in the brig, as he called a dank cellar which he determined to utilize for mutineers, as on board ship. The cook, a huge creature three times as big as Sir Peter, boarded him in his own particular den, and, brandishing a rolling-pin that was quite as dangerous as a cutlass, announced that she would no longer submit to be governed by the articles of war, as administered by Sir Peter. She was sustained by a vociferous chorus of housemaids and kitchen girls who flocked behind her, the men rather choosing to remain in the background and grinning. Sad to say, Admiral Sir Peter Hawkshaw, C.B., was conquered by the virago with the rolling-pin, and was forced to surrender to the mutineers, which he did with a very bad grace. At that juncture Lady Hawkshaw hove in sight, and, bearing down upon the company from below stairs, dispersed them all with one wave of her hand. Sir Peter complained bitterly, and Lady Hawkshaw promised to bring them to summary punishment. But she warned Sir Peter that his methods were becoming as intolerable to her as to the rest of the family, and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Sir Peter, after a round or two for the honor of his flag, hauled down his colors. This became especially necessary, as his retirement was at hand, consequent more upon an obstinate rheumatism that fixed itself upon him than his age. There was doubt whether he would get the K.C.B., which he certainly well deserved, on his retirement; there was some sort of hitch about it, although, after the capture of the two French ships, he had been promoted to the office of admiral. Lady Hawkshaw, however, went down to the Admiralty in a coach with six horses and three footmen and four outriders, and, marching in upon the First Lord, opened fire on him, with the result that Sir Peter was gazetted K.C.B. the very next week.

Little Daphne, who had always submitted to Sir Peter's whims, did so more than ever after he had been vanquished by the cook; and Sir Peter swore, twenty times a week, that Daphne had the stuff in her to make a sea-officer of the first order.

My infatuation for Lady Arabella continued; but I can not say she ever showed me the least mark of favor. But that she did to no one ex-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

cept Overton, and I soon knew what everybody in the town knew, that she was desperately smitten with him, and would have bestowed herself and her fortune upon him at any moment, if he would but accept it. As for Giles Vernon, she showed him what no other woman ever did,—a coolness at first, that deepened into something like active hatred. She knew he stood between Overton and the heirship to the Vernon estates, and that was enough to make her dislike him. She often remarked upon his want of good looks, and she was the only woman I ever knew to do it. Yet Giles was undeniably hard-featured, and, except a good figure, had nothing in his person to recommend him. I had thought that pride would have kept Giles from paying court to a person so inimical to him; but pride was the excuse he gave for still pursuing her. He declared he had never, no, never, been flouted by a woman, and that Lady Arabella should yet come at his call. This I believed at the time to be mere bravado. He was enchanted by her, that was the truth, and could no more leave her than the moth can leave the candle.

I saw much of Daphne in those days, chiefly

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

because I could see so little of Lady Arabella, who led a life of singular independence, little restrained by the authority of Lady Hawkshaw, and none at all by Sir Peter. Daphne was fond of books, and commonly went about with one under her arm. I, too, was inclined to be bookish; and so there was something in common between us. She was keener of wit than any one in that house; and I soon learned to take delight in her conversation, in Lady Arabella's absence. My love for the Lady Arabella was, I admit, the fond fancy of a boy; while Giles Vernon's was the mad infatuation of a man.

Giles was much with us at that time; and I acknowledge I had great benefit from the spending of his prize-money — or rather, I should say, much enjoyment. He laid it out right royally, asked the price of nothing, and, for the time he was in London, footed it with the best of them. His lineage and his heirship to Sir Thomas Vernon gave him entrance anywhere; and his wit and courage made his place secure. Shortly after we arrived, Sir Thomas Vernon also arrived at his house in Grosvenor Square. We were bound to meet him, for Giles

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

went much into gay society, as I did, in the train of Lady Hawkshaw. The first time this occurred was at a drum at her Grace of Auchester's, where all of London was assembled. Even Overton, who was rarely seen in drawing-rooms, was there. Giles, of course, was there; her Grace had fallen in love with him, as women usually did, the first time she met him.

It was a great house for play; and when we arrived, we found the whole suite of splendid apartments on the lower floor prepared for cards.

There was the usual crush and clamor of a fine London party; and I, being young and unsophisticated, enjoyed it, as did Daphne. Names were bawled out at the head of the stairs, but could not be distinguished over the roar of voices. I happened to be near the door, with Giles, Lady Arabella being near by, when I heard the name of Sir Thomas Vernon shouted out, as he entered.

He was a man of middle size, and was between forty and fifty years of age. He might once have been handsome; but the ravages of an evil nature and a broken constitution were

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

plainly visible in his countenance. I observed that, as he stood, glancing about him before making his *devoirs* to the Duchess of Auchenester, no one spoke to him, or seemed disposed to recognize him. This only brought a sardonic grin to his countenance. He advanced, and was civilly, though not cordially, received by her Grace. At that moment, Giles approached, and spoke to her, and the change in the great lady's manner showed the favor in which she held him. Sir Thomas scowled upon Giles, but bowed slightly; and Giles returned the look by a steady glance, and this stinging remark:

“Good evening, Sir Thomas. You look very ill. Is your health as desperate as I heard it was two years ago?”

A titter went around at this, and Giles moved off, smiling. Sir Thomas was unpopular, there could be no doubt about that.

Presently Sir Thomas caught sight of Lady Arabella, and, as usual, he was instantly struck by her exquisite beauty. He succeeded in being presented to her, and I noted that she received him with affability.

About midnight the company broke up, and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

our party made a move to go, but Lady Arabella announced that she had been invited by her Grace of Auchester to stay the night, and she wished to do so. Neither Sir Peter nor Lady Hawkshaw perfectly approved; but Lady Arabella carried her point, with the assistance of the duchess. At the last moment, her Grace — a fine woman — approached me, and said confidentially,—

“Mr. Wynne,—Glyn, I mean,—will you not remain, and share a game with a choice collection of players?”

I was flattered at being asked; and besides, I wanted to see how these great London ladies acted at such play, so I accepted. But it was another thing to get away from Lady Hawkshaw. However, I managed to elude her, by giving a shilling to a footman, who shoved me into a little closet, and then went and told Lady Hawkshaw I had gone home in a coach with a gentleman who had been taken ill, and had left word for them to go without me. This pacified her, and she and Sir Peter and Daphne went away with the crowd. There were left about twenty persons, who, after a little supper,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and general expressions of relief at the departure of the other guests, sat down to play, at one in the morning. There was a cabinet minister, also a political parson, two peers of the realm, several officers of the Guards, Giles Vernon, and your humble servant. The ladies were mostly old,—Lady Arabella was the youngest of them all,—but all very great in rank.

I had wanted to see London ladies play—and I saw them. Jack, with his greasy cards, in the forecastle, laying his month's wages, was a child to them. And how they watched one another, and quarreled and fought!

No one among them played so eagerly as Lady Arabella; and very badly, as usual, so that she managed to lose all her money. She was ever a bad player, with all her passion for play. Her last guinea went; and then, determined not to be balked, she rose and said, laughing,—

“I have on a new white satin petticoat, with lace that cost three guineas the yard. It is very fit for waistcoats. No gentleman will be so ungallant as to refuse my petticoat as a stake.”

Of course, they all applauded; and Lady

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Arabella, retiring behind a screen, emerged with her satin petticoat — how it shone and shimmered! — in her hand. And in five minutes, she had lost it to Giles Vernon!

There was much laughter, but Giles, gravely folding it up, laid it aside; and when we departed, in the gray light of dawn, he carried it off under his arm.

As for me, I had lost all the money I had with me, and had given my I O U for three hundred pounds.

Next day Lady Arabella was dropped in Berkeley Square by her Grace of Auchester. It was in the afternoon, and I was sitting in the Chinese room with Lady Hawkshaw and Daphne when Lady Arabella appeared.

“Well, Dicky,” she said, — a very offensive mode of addressing me, — “how do you stand your losses at play?” And, as I am a sinner, she plumped out the whole story of my play to Lady Hawkshaw and Daphne. As an officer and a gentleman, I scorned to retaliate by telling of the white satin petticoat. But vengeance was at hand. Just as she had finished, when Lady Hawkshaw was swelling with rage, like a

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

toad, before opening her main batteries on me, and Daphne's fair eyes were full of contempt for me, we heard a commotion outside. None of us could keep from going to the window, and the sight we saw threw Lady Arabella into a perfect tempest of angry tears.

A fife and drum were advancing up the street, playing with great vigor the old tune known as "Petticoats Loose." Behind them marched, with the deepest gravity, a couple of marines, bearing aloft on their muskets a glittering shimmering thing that fluttered whitely in the air. It was Lady Arabella's satin petticoat; and, halting before the door, the drum, with a great flourish, pounded the knocker. On the porter's responding, the two marines handed the petticoat in with ceremony to him, directing him to convey it to the Lady Arabella Stormont, with the compliments of Lieutenant Giles Vernon of his Majesty's service. This the man did, and was almost torn to pieces by her for doing so, though in what way he had offended, I know not to this day. It was a trifling thing, and made laughter for us all (including Lady Hawkshaw), except Arabella. She seemed to



It was Lady Arabella's satin petticoat. *Page 92*

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

hate Giles with a more virulent hatred after that, and tried very hard to induce Lady Hawkshaw to forbid him the house, which, however, Lady Hawkshaw refused to do.

Neither Giles nor I had by any means forgotten our appointment to meet Captain Overton on the field of honor; and as the time approached for the meeting, Giles sent a very civil note to Overton, asking him to name a gentleman who would see me to arrange the preliminaries, for I would never have forgiven Giles had he chosen any one else. Overton responded, naming our old first lieutenant, Mr. Buxton, who happened to be in London then, and was an acquaintance of his. I believe Overton's object in asking Mr. Buxton to act for him was the hope that the affair might be arranged; for from what I had heard of the deeply religious turn Overton had taken, I concluded the meeting was somewhat against his conscience. But the indignity of a blow in the face to an officer could not be easily wiped out without an exchange of shots. My principal was much disgusted when Mr. Buxton was named.

"I know how it will be, Dicky," he growled.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“ You will sit like a great gaby, with your mouth open, imagining the tavern parlor to be the cockpit of the *Ajax*. Mr. Buxton will talk to you in his quarter-deck voice, and you will be so frightened that you will agree to use bird-shot at forty paces, provided Mr. Buxton proposes it.”

This I indignantly denied, and swore I would meet Mr. Buxton as man to man. Nevertheless, when we were sitting at the table in Mr. Buxton's lodgings, I did very much as Giles had predicted. I forgot several things that I had wished to say, and said several things I wished I had forgotten. Mr. Buxton did not let me forget, however, that he had been my first lieutenant, and I was but a midshipman. He called my principal a hot-headed jackanapes before my very face, adding angrily,—

“ But for him I should have been first on the *Indomptable's* deck.” To all this I made but a feeble protest; and finally it was arranged that the meeting should take place at a spot very near Richmond, at eight o'clock, on the morning of June the twenty-ninth.

When the date was set, and the arrangements

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

made, I began to feel very much frightened. Not so Giles. There was to be a great ball at Almack's on the night of the twenty-eighth and Giles announced that he was going. It was a very special occasion for him, because the Trenchard, whom he still called the divine Sylvia, and professed to admire as much as ever, was to go that night. She was then the rage, and had a carriage, diamonds, and a fine establishment, yet I believe her conduct to have been irreproachable. She had long been consumed with a desire to go to Almack's, but up to that time no actress had ever yet enjoyed the privilege. It seemed grotesque enough that a young midshipman, of no more consequence than Giles Vernon, should succeed in carrying this through. But such was actually the case; and Giles accomplished it by that singular power he possessed, by which no woman could say him nay. He worked with much art upon those great ladies, her Grace of Auchester and Lady Conyngham, and got them pledged to it. Of course, the most violent opposition was developed; but Giles, who had a perfect knowledge of the feminine heart, managed to inspire

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

these two ladies with the wish to exercise their sovereignty over Almack's, by doing what was never done before. Having led them into the fight, they had no thought of running away; and the result was innumerable heartburnings and jealousies, and meanwhile a card for Mrs. Trenchard.

The noise of the controversy was heard all over town, and it was discussed in Berkeley Square as elsewhere. Lady Hawkshaw was no longer a subscriber to Almack's. Not being able to rule it, she had retired, the assembly rooms not being large enough to hold herself and a certain other lady.

Giles had told me that on the evening of the ball he and other gentlemen interested in the victory for Mrs. Trenchard would escort her to the ball. So at eight o'clock I proceeded to the lady's house in Jermyn Street, and saw her set forth in state in her chair. She was blazing with diamonds, and looked like a stage duchess. A long company of gentlemen with their swords attended her, and Giles and my Lord Winstanley led the procession. Mrs. Trenchard was the best imitation of a lady I ever saw, as she sat

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

in her chair, smiling and fanning herself, with the linkboys gaping and grinning at her; and the gentlemen especially, such as had had a little more wine than usual, shouting, "Way for Mrs. Trenchard! Make way there!"

Yet it seemed to me as if she were only an imitation, after all, and that Lady Hawkshaw, with her turban and her outlandish French, had much more the genuine air of a great lady. Mrs. Trenchard would go to Almack's on any terms, but Lady Hawkshaw would not go, except she ruled the roost, and fought gallantly with the duchesses and countesses, only retiring from the field because she was one against many.

I followed the merry procession until we got to King Street, St. James's, where the coaches were four deep, and footmen, in regiments, blockaded the street. Giles and Lord Winstanley were to take Mrs. Trenchard in, and very grand the party looked as they entered. By that time, though, I was very miserable. I remembered that at the same time the next night, I might not have my friend. I hung around among the footmen and idlers, watching the lights and listening to the crash of the music,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

quite unconscious of the flight of time, and was astonished when the ball was over and the people began pouring out. Then, afraid to be caught by Giles, I ran home as fast as my legs could carry me.

When I reached Berkeley Square, it was altogether dark, and I realized that I was locked out.

I looked all over the front of the house, and my heart sank. There was a blind alley at one side, and I remembered that in it opened the window of Sir Peter's study, as he called it, although, as I have said, it was more like the cubby-hole of the *Ajax* than any other place I can call to mind. The window was at least twenty feet from the ground, but a waterspout ran up the wall beside it, and to a midshipman, used to going out on the topsail-yard, it was a trifle to get up to the window. I climbed up, softly tried the window, and to my joy found it open. In another minute I was standing inside the room. I had my flint and steel in my pocket, and I groped about until I found a candle, which I lighted.

I had often been in the room before, but its

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

grotesque appearance struck me afresh, and I could not forbear laughing, although I was in no laughing mood. There was a regular ship's transom running around the wall. The whole room was full of the useless odds and ends that accumulate on board a ship, all arranged with the greatest neatness and economy of space, and there was not one single object in the room which could possibly be of the slightest use on shore.

I looked around to see how I could make myself comfortable for the night, and, opening a locker in the wall, I found a collection of old boat-cloaks of Sir Peter's, in every stage of dilapidation, but all laid away with the greatest care. Taking one for my pillow and two more for my coverlet, I lay down on the transom and, blowing out the candle, was soon in a sound sleep.

I was awakened at five o'clock in the morning by the chiming of a neighboring church bell, and at the same moment, I saw the door to the room noiselessly open, and Lady Arabella Stormont enter, carrying a candle which she shaded with her hand. I involuntarily cov-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

ered my head up, thinking she had probably come in search of something, and would be alarmed if a man suddenly jumped from the pile of boat-cloaks. But she went to a glass door which led out upon a balcony, with stairs into the garden, and unlocked the door. I had completely forgotten about these stairs, not being familiar with the room, when I climbed up and got in through the window.

Presently I heard a step upon the stairs, and before the person who was coming had time to knock, Lady Arabella opened the door. The rosy dawn of a clear June morning made it light outside, but inside the room it was quite dark, except for the candle carried by Lady Arabella.

A man entered, and as soon as he was in the room, she noiselessly locked the door, and, unseen by him, put the key in her pocket.

As he turned, and the candlelight fell upon his face, I saw it was Philip Overton. Amusement was pictured in his face, and in his voice, too, when he spoke.

“I was sent for in haste, by Sir Peter, just now,” he said, with some confusion.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

At which Lady Arabella laughed, as if it were a very good joke that he should find her instead of Sir Peter. Meanwhile, my own chaos of mind prevented me from understanding fully what they were saying; but I gathered that Lady Arabella had devised some trick, in which she had freely used Sir Peter Hawkshaw's name to get Overton there in that manner and in that room. Sir Peter was such a very odd fish that no one was surprised at what he did. It was no use striving not to listen,—they were not five feet from me,—and I lay there in terror, realizing that I was in a very dangerous position. I soon discovered that Overton's reputation for lately-acquired Methodistical piety had not done away with a very hot temper. He was enraged, as only a man can be who is entrapped, and demanded at once of Lady Arabella to be let out of the glass door, when he found it locked. She refused to tell him where the key was, and he threatened to break the glass and escape that way.

“Do it then, if you wish,” she cried, “and rouse the house and the neighborhood, and ruin me if you will. But before you do it, read this,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and then know what Arabella Stormont can do for the man she loves!"

She thrust a letter into his hand, and, slipping out of the door to the corridor, as swiftly and silently as a swallow in its flight, she locked it after her; Overton was a prisoner in Sir Peter's room. He tore the letter open, read the few lines it contained, and then threw it down with an oath. The next minute he caught sight of me; in my surprise I had forgotten all my precautions, and had half arisen.

"You hound!" he said. "Are you in this infernal plot?" And he kicked the boat-cloaks off me.

"I am not," said I coolly, recalled to myself by the term he had used toward me; "and neither am I a hound. You will kindly remember to account to me for that expression, Captain Overton."

"Read that," he cried, throwing Lady Arabella's letter toward me. I think he meant not to do a dishonorable thing in giving me the letter to read, but it was an act of involuntary rage.

It read thus:—

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

"I know that you were to fight Mr. Vernon at eight o'clock this morning, therefore I beguiled you here; for your life is dearer to me than anything in heaven and earth; and I will not let you out until that very hour, when it will be too late for you to get to Twickenham. You will not dare to raise a commotion in the house at this hour, which would ruin us both. But by the jeopardy in which I placed myself this night, you will know how true is the love of

"ARABELLA STORMONT."

I confess that the reading of this letter made me a partizan of Overton; for surely no more unhandsome trick was ever played upon a gentleman.

There was nothing for it but to sit down and wait for eight o'clock. Sir Peter's family were late risers, and there was little danger of detection at that hour. So we sat, and gazed at each other, mute before the mystery of the good and evil in a woman's love. I confess the experience was new to me.

"You will bear me witness, Mr. Glyn," said Overton, "that I am detained here against my will; but I think it a piece of good fortune that you are detained with me."

"I will bear witness to nothing, sir," I re-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

plied, "until you have given me satisfaction for calling me a hound, just now."

"Dear sir, pray forget that hasty expression. In my rage and amazement, just now, I would have called the commander-in-chief of the forces a hound. Pray accept every apology that a gentleman can make. I was quite beside myself, as you must have seen."

I saw that he was very anxious to conciliate me; for upon my testimony alone would rest the question of whether he voluntarily or involuntarily failed to appear at the meeting arranged for eight o'clock.

I also perceived the strength of my position, and a dazzling idea presented itself to my mind.

"I will agree," said I, "to testify to everything in your favor, if you will but promise me not to — not to —" I hesitated, ashamed to express my womanish fears for Giles Vernon's life; but he seemed to read my thoughts.

"Do you mean, not to do Mr. Vernon any harm in the meeting which will, of course, take place, the instant it can be arranged? That I promise you; for I never had any personal animosity toward Mr. Vernon. His blow, like my

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

words just now, was the outburst of passion, and not a deliberate insult."

I was overjoyed at this; and as I sat, grinning in my delight, I must have been in strong contrast to Overton, in the very blackness of rage.

The minutes dragged slowly on, and we heard the clock strike six and seven. The dim light of a foggy morning stole in at the windows. Not a soul was stirring in the house; but on the stroke of eight, a light step fluttered near the outer door. It was softly unlocked, and Lady Arabella entered, carefully locking the door on the inside, after her, this time. In the ghostly half-light, Overton rose, and saluted her with much ceremony.

"Lady Arabella Stormont," he said, "you have delayed the meeting between Mr. Vernon and myself just twenty-four hours. To do it, you have put my honor in jeopardy, and that I shall not soon forget. I beg you to open the glass door, and allow me to bid you farewell."

She stopped, as if paralyzed for a moment, when I, knowing the key to be in her pocket, deftly fished it out, and opened the door, and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Overton walked out. She could not stop me, — I was too quick for her, — but she ran after me, and fetched me a box on the ear, which did more than sting my cheek and my pride. It killed, in one single instant of time, the boyish love I had had for her, ever since the first hour I had seen her. I own I was afraid to retaliate as a gentleman should, by kissing her violently ; but dashing on, I sped down the steps outside, after Overton, not caring to remain alone with the Lady Arabella. I saw her no more that day, nor until the afternoon of the next day.

VI

As Overton had said, the meeting was delayed exactly twenty-four hours.

My courage always has an odd way of disappearing when I am expecting to use it, although I must say, when I have had actual occasion for it, I have always found it easily at hand. I can not deny that I was very much frightened for Giles on the morning of the meeting, and, to add to my misery, I heard that Overton was considered one of the best shots in England.

The dreary breakfast gulped down; the post-chaise rattling up to the door—I had hoped until the last moment that it would not come; the bumping along the road in the cool, bright summer morning; the gruesome, long, narrow box that lay on the front seat of the chaise; the packet of letters which Giles had given me and which seemed to weigh a hundred tons in my pocket,—all these were so many horrors to haunt the memory for ever. But I must say that, apparently, the misery was all mine; for

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I never saw Giles Vernon show so much as by the flicker of an eyelash that he was disturbed in any way.

About half-way from the meeting-ground we left the highway and turned into a by-road; and scarcely had we gone half a mile when we almost drove into a broken-down chaise, and standing on the roadside among the furze bushes were the coachman, the surgeon,—a most bloody-minded man I always believed him, — Mr. Buxton, and Overton.

Our chaise stopped, and Giles, putting his head out of the window, said pleasantly, "Good morning, gentlemen; you have had an accident, I see."

"A bad one," replied Mr. Buxton, who saw that their chaise was beyond help, and who, as he said afterward, was playing for a place in our chaise, not liking to walk the rest of the distance.

Giles jumped out and so did I, and the most courteous greetings were exchanged.

The two drivers, as experts, examined the broken chaise, and agreed there was no patching it up for service; one wheel was splintered.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Mr. Buxton looked at Giles meaningly, and then at me, and Giles whispered to me,—

“Offer to take ’em up. By Jupiter, they shall see we are no shirkers.”

Which I did, and, to my amazement, in a few moments we were all lumbering along the road; Overton and Mr. Buxton on the back seat, and Giles and I with our backs to the horses, while the surgeon was alongside the coachman on the box.

Nothing could exceed the politeness between the two principals, about the seats as about everything else. Overton was with difficulty persuaded to take the back seat. Mr. Buxton seated himself there without any introduction. (I hope it will never again be my fortune to negotiate so delicate an affair as a meeting between gentlemen, with one so much my superior in rank as Mr. Buxton.)

“May I ask, Mr. Overton, if you prefer the window down or up?” asked Giles, with great deference.

“Either, dear sir,” responded Overton. “I believe it was up when you kindly invited us to enter.”

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“ True ; but you may be sensitive to the air, and may catch cold.”

At which Mr. Buxton grinned in a heartless manner. The window remained up.

We were much crowded with the two pistol-cases and the surgeon’s box of instruments, which to me appeared more appalling than the pistols.

At last we reached the spot,—a small, flat place under a sweetly-blooming hawthorn hedge, with some verdant oaks at either end.

Giles and Overton were so scrupulous about taking precedence of each other in getting out of the chaise, that I had strong hopes the day would pass before they came to a decision ; but Mr. Buxton finally got out himself and pulled his man after him, and then we were soon marking off the ground, and I was feeling that mortal sickness which had attacked me the first time I was under fire in the *Ajax*.

Overton won the toss for position, and at that I could have lain down and wept.

Our men were placed twenty paces apart, with their backs to each other. At the word “ one,” they were to turn, advance and fire be-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

tween the words "two" and "three." This seemed to me the most murderous arrangement I had ever heard of.

The stories I had so lately heard about Overton's proficiency with the pistol made me think, even if he did not kill Giles intentionally, he would attempt some expert trick with the pistol, which would do the business equally well. I knew Giles to be a very poor shot, and concluded that he, through awkwardness, would probably put an end to Overton, and I regarded them both as doomed men.

I shall never forget my feelings as we were placing our men, or after Mr. Buxton and I had retired to a place under the hedge. Just as we had selected our places, Giles, looking over his shoulder, said in his usual cool, soft voice,—

"Don't you think, gentlemen, you had better move two or three furlongs off? Mr. Overton may grow excited and fire wild."

I thought this a most dangerous as well as foolish speech, and calculated to irritate Overton; and for the first time I saw a gleam of anger in his eye, which had hitherto been mild, and even sad. For I believed then, and knew

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

afterward, that his mind was far from easy on the subject of dueling. I wish to say here that I also believe, had he been fully convinced that dueling was wrong, he would have declined to fight, no matter what the consequences had been; for I never knew a man with more moral courage. But at the time, although his views were changing on the subject, they were not wholly changed.

Mr. Buxton, without noticing Giles' speech, coughed once or twice, and then waited two or three minutes before giving the word.

The summer sun shone brilliantly, turning the distant river to a silver ribbon. A thrush rioted musically in the hawthorn hedge. All things spoke of life and hope, but to my sinking heart insensate Nature only mocked us. I heard, as in a dream, the words "One, two, three" slowly uttered by Mr. Buxton, and saw, still as in a dream, both men turn and raise their pistols.

Overton's was discharged first; then, as he stood like a man in marble waiting for his adversary's fire, Giles raised his pistol and, taking deliberate aim at the bird still singing in



Overton took off his hat and bowed. *Page 113*



The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the hedge, brought it down. It was a mere lucky shot, but Overton took off his hat and bowed to the ground, and Giles responded by taking off his hat and showing a hole through the brim.

“You see, Mr. Glyn,” said Overton, “I have done according to my promise. It was not my intention to kill Mr. Vernon, but only to frighten him,”—which speech Mr. Buxton and I considered as a set-off to Giles’ speech just before shots were exchanged.

The two principals remained where they were, while Mr. Buxton and I retired behind the hedge to confer—or rather for Mr. Buxton to say to me,—

“Another shot would be damned nonsense. My man is satisfied, or shall be, else I am a Dutch trooper. Certainly you have nothing to complain of.”

I was only too happy to accept this solution, but more out of objection to being browbeaten by Mr. Buxton than anything else, I said,—

“We shall require an explanation of your principal’s observation just now, sir.”

“Shall you?” angrily asked Mr. Buxton,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

exactly in the tone he used when the carpenter's mate complained that the jack-o'-the-dust had cribbed his best saw. "Then I shall call your man to account in regard to his late observation, and we can keep them popping away at each other all day. But this is no slaughter-pen, Mr. Glyn, nor am I the ship's butcher, and I shall take my man back to town and give him a glass of spirits and some breakfast, and I advise you to do the same. You are very young, Mr. Glyn, and you still need to know a thing or two." Then, advancing from behind the hedge, he said in the dulcet tone he used when the admiral asked him to have wine,—

"Gentlemen, Mr. Glyn and myself, after conferring, have agreed that the honor of our principals is fully established, and that the controversy is completely at an end. Allow me to congratulate you both,"—and there was a general hand-shaking all around. I noticed that the coachman, who was attentively watching the performance, looked slightly disappointed at the turn of affairs.

Straightway, we all climbed into the chaise, and I think I shall be believed when I say that

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

our return to town was more cheerful than our departure had been.

We all agreed to dine together at Mivart's the next night, and I saw no reason to believe that there was any remnant of ill feeling between the two late combatants.

I returned to Berkeley Square that afternoon, with much uneasiness concerning my meeting and future intercourse with Lady Arabella; for I had not seen her since the occurrence in Sir Peter's study. Although my affection for her was for ever killed by that box on the ear she gave me, yet no man can see a woman shamed before him without pain, and the anticipation of Lady Arabella's feelings when she saw me troubled me. But this was what actually happened when we met. Lady Arabella was sitting in the Chinese drawing-room, her lap-dog in her arms, surrounded by half a dozen fops. Lady Hawkshaw had left the room for a moment, and Arabella had taken the opportunity of showing her trick of holding out her dog's paws and kissing his nose, which she called measuring love-ribbon. This performance never failed to throw gentlemen into ecsta-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

sies. Daphne sat near, with her work in her lap and a book on the table by her, smiling rather disdainfully. I do not think the cousins loved each other.

On my appearance in the drawing-room, I scarcely dared look toward Lady Arabella; but she called out familiarly,—

“Come here, Dicky!” (her habit of calling me Dicky annoyed me very much), “and let me show you how I kiss Fido’s nose; and if you are a good boy, and will tell me all about the meeting this morning, perhaps I may hold your paws out and kiss your nose,”—at which all the gentlemen present laughed loudly. I never was so embarrassed in my life, and my chagrin was increased when, suddenly dropping the dog, she rushed at me, seized my hands, and, holding them off at full arm’s length, imprinted a sounding smack upon my nose, and laughingly cried out, “One yard!” (Smack on my nose again.) “Two yards!” (Smack.) “Three yards!” (Smack.)

At this juncture I recovered my presence of mind enough to seize her around the waist, and return her smacks with interest full in the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

mouth. And at this stage of the proceedings Lady Hawkshaw appeared upon the scene.

In an instant an awful hush fell upon us. For my part I felt my knees sinking under me, and I had that feeling of mortal sickness which I had felt in my first sea-fight, and at the instant I thought my friend's life in jeopardy. Lady Arabella stood up, for once, confused. The gentlemen all retired gracefully to the wall, in order not to interrupt the proceedings, and Daphne fixed her eyes upon me, sparkling with indignation.

Lady Hawkshaw's voice, when she spoke, seemed to come from the tombs of the Pharaohs.

"What is this *countrytom* I see?" she asked. And nobody answered a word.

James, the tall footman, stood behind her; and to him she turned, saying in a tone like thunder,—

"Jeames, go and tell Sir Peter Hawkshaw that I desire his presence immediately upon a matter of the greatest importance."

The footman literally ran down stairs, and presently Sir Peter came puffing up from the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

lower regions. Lady Arabella had recovered herself then enough to hum a little tune and to pat the floor with her satin slipper.

Sir Peter walked in, surveyed us all, and turned pale. I verily believe he thought Arabella had been caught cheating at cards.

“Sir Peter,” said Lady Hawkshaw, in the same awful voice, “I unexpectedly entered this room a few moments ago, and the sight that met my eyes was Arabella struggling in the arms of this young ruffian, Richard Glyn, who was kissing her with the greatest fury imaginable.”

Sir Peter looked at me very hard, and after a moment said,—

“Have you nothing to say for yourself, young gentleman?”

“Sir,” I replied, trying to assume a firm tone, “I will only say that Lady Arabella, meaning to treat me like her lap-dog, kissed me on the nose, as she does that beast of hers; and as an officer and a gentleman, I felt called upon to pay her back; and for every smack she gave me on my nose, I gave her two back in the mouth, to show her that an officer in his

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Majesty's sea-service is a man, and not a lap-dog."

"Do you hear that, Sir Peter?" asked Lady Hawkshaw, with terrible earnestness. "He does not deny his guilt. What think you of his conduct?"

"Think, ma'am!" shouted Sir Peter, "I think if he had done anything else, it would have been clean against the articles of war, and I myself would have seen that he was kicked out of his Majesty's service. I shall send for my solicitor, to-morrow morning, to put a codicil to my will, giving Richard Glyn a thousand pounds at my decease."

At this the gentlemen roared, and Lady Arabella, seizing the lap-dog, hid her face in his long hair, while even Daphne smiled and blushed. As for Lady Hawkshaw, for once she was disconcerted and walked out, glaring over her shoulder at Sir Peter.

There was much laughter, Sir Peter joining in; but after a while the gentlemen left, and Sir Peter went out, and Daphne, who I saw was disgusted with my conduct, walked haughtily away, in spite of Lady Arabella's playful pro-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

tests that she was afraid to remain alone in the room with me.

One thing had puzzled me extremely, and that was her calmness, and even gaiety, when she had no means of knowing how Overton had come off in the meeting, and I said to her,—

“How did you know, or do you know, whether Philip Overton and Giles Vernon are alive at this moment?”

“By your face, Dicky,” she answered, trying to give me a fillip on the nose, which I successfully resisted. “I was in agony until I saw your face. Then I gave one great breath of joy and relief, and my play with my lap-dog, which had been torture to me, became delight. But tell me the particulars.”

“No, Madam,” said I; “I tell you nothing.”

This angered her, and she said, after a moment,—

“I presume you will take an early opportunity of telling Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw that I saw Philip Overton alone in this house, at five o’clock yesterday morning?”

“I am quite unaware, Madam,” replied I,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

stung by this, "of anything in my character or conduct which could induce you to think such a thing of me."

"You made me no promise not to tell," she said.

"Certainly not. But some things are considered universally binding among gentlemen, and one is to tell nothing to the disadvantage of a woman. I neither made, nor will make, a promise about that affair; but if it is ever known, it will be you or Overton who tells it, not I."

And I walked out of the room.

I speedily found, after that, my life in Berkeley Square uncomfortable. I felt constrained before Lady Arabella, and, what seemed strange to me, little Daphne, who had hitherto treated me with greatest kindness, seemed to take a spite at me, and her gibes and cuts were hard to bear. Neither Sir Peter nor Lady Hawkshaw noted these things, but they were strong enough to impel me to ask Sir Peter to look out for a ship for me at the Admiralty.

I saw Giles Vernon every day, and he continued to come, with unabated assurance, to

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Berkeley Square. We were not anxious that the fact of the duel should leak out, and Overton was especially desirous to keep it quiet. Of course, he came no more to Berkeley Square, and withdrew more and more from his former associates. He began to consort much with persons of the John Wesley persuasion, spending much of his time, when not on duty, at Oxford, where the Wesleyans were numerous at the time. I noticed that Lady Arabella treated Giles, and me, also, with more civility than she had hitherto shown. I could not think it sincere, but attributed it to a natural desire to conciliate those who knew so much to her disadvantage. But that she made no effort to overcome her infatuation for Overton, I very soon had proof. Sir Thomas Vernon, soon after this, had the assurance to present himself in Berkeley Square, and rare sport it was. Lady Hawkshaw, Lady Arabella, Daphne, myself, and one or two other persons were in the Chinese drawing-room when he was ushered in.

Lady Hawkshaw and Sir Thomas were old acquaintances, and had been at feud for more than thirty years, neither side asking or giving

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

quarter. Sir Thomas had a shrewd wit of his own, and was more nearly a match for Lady Hawkshaw than any one I had yet seen. He opened the ball by remarking on Lady Hawkshaw's improved appearance, partly due, he thought, to her triumph in getting the K. C. B. for Sir Peter. This nettled Lady Hawkshaw extremely, and she retaliated by telling Sir Thomas that he looked younger than he did when she first knew him, thirty years ago. As Sir Thomas hated any allusion to his age, this shot told.

"And allow me to congratulate you, Sir Thomas," added Lady Hawkshaw, "upon your very promising cousin, Mr. Giles Vernon. Sir Peter has the highest opinion of him, and he has won the favor of the *bong-tong* to an extraordinary degree."

"He may have won the favor of the *bong-tong*," replied Sir Thomas, impudently mimicking Lady Hawkshaw's French, "but he has not yet succeeded in winning *my* favor."

"That's a pity," said Lady Hawkshaw; "but it doesn't signify, I dare say. It will not keep you alive a day longer. And there is your other

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

cousin — Captain Overton of the Guards. He is what so few of our young men are, pious and God-fearing.”

“And a sniveling, John Wesley Methodist besides,” snarled Sir Thomas, much exasperated.

“Bless me, Sir Thomas,” cried Lady Hawkshaw, “don’t be so hard on those worthy people, the Methodists.”

I own this surprised me, for if there was anything on earth upon which Lady Hawkshaw was uncompromising, it was Church and State; and, excellent woman though she was, I believe she would have been rather glad to make one big bonfire of all the dissenters in England.

Sir Thomas was far from insensible to Lady Arabella’s charms, and, after a further exchange of hostilities with Lady Hawkshaw, turned to Arabella. She smiled upon him, and seemed anxious to conciliate him; and in a little while I caught enough of their conversation to know that she was telling him of the meeting between Giles and Overton, and representing that it had been forced upon Overton by the insults of Giles Vernon. Sir Thomas’ response to her tale was that he did not give a damn for either of them,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and if both had bit the dust he should not have been sorry.

When Sir Thomas left, Lady Hawkshaw called the tall footman.

“Jeames,” she said, “when that — person calls again, the ladies are not at home. Do you understand?”

James understood perfectly, in spite of Lady Arabella’s scowls.

It is not to be supposed that a young man of Giles Vernon’s spirit had not been able to go through with his prize-money and run pretty considerably in debt in five or six weeks in London, and one morning, some days after this, when I went to see Giles at his lodgings, I found the bailiffs in possession. Giles, however, was as merry as a grig, because that very morning he had got an appointment to the *Belvidera* frigate.

It was not much after having served in the *Ajax*, but it meant leaving that uncertain and trying element, dry land, for another element on which Giles was much more at home, to wit, the blue sea. So he sent out for a pot of porter, and he and I, together with the bailiffs,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

drank to the *Belvidera*; and I swore, then and there, that go with him I would. For, in the excess of my affection for Giles, I would have taken almost any service to be with him. The frigates, too, were more in the way of activity, as the enemy was wary of meeting our ships of the line, but the frigates could go hunting after him. So, when I returned to Berkeley Square that day, I begged Sir Peter to get me a berth in the *Belvidera*. He was pleased with my spirit, and the very next day he went to the Admiralty for me. The complement was full, but, luckily for me, one of the juniors got a billet more to his liking, and Sir Peter, being on the spot, got me the vacancy, and I was ordered to report at once at Plymouth.

It took me but a day or two to get my outfit and make ready to start. Lady Hawkshaw showed me great kindness then, and actually allowed me to have a considerable sum of my own money. Lady Arabella treated me with her usual indifference, and, on the day I was to go, bade me a careless adieu.

When the post-chaise was at the door and I went to the Chinese drawing-room to tell Lady

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Hawkshaw and Sir Peter good-by, Daphne was there with them, and she looked as if she had been weeping. Sir Peter gave me a letter to my new captain, Vere, and some words of encouragement. Lady Hawkshaw delivered a homily to me on my duty, which I received out of respect for her real excellence of heart, and thanked her in a manner which made Sir Peter my friend for life. Daphne said not a word when I took her hand, but handing me a little parcel ran out of the room. I afterward found it to be a little housewife made by her own hands.

I went down to the chaise, puzzled at her conduct, but, looking up for the last time to the windows, I saw her peering from behind a curtain. I raised the parcel to my lips, and, as she saw it, a smile broke over her face. My last glimpse of her was like an April day,—she was all smiles and tears,—and it was destined to remain in my memory.

Giles Vernon was waiting for me at the corner of the street. We were to make the journey to Plymouth together.

“Well,” he cried, when we found ourselves

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

rolling along to meet the coach, "I have had my cake and eaten it."

"How I envy you!" I said bitterly. "I have not had my cake. Every shilling of my prize-money is in bank, except about two hundred pounds."

"Poor chap!" answered Giles feelingly. "How much more of life have I seen in London than you! I have seen everything, including that queen of hearts, Lady Arabella Stormont. She has treated me cruelly, the jade! But I will bring her to my hand at last, that I swear to you."

I longed that he might know of that episode with Overton in Sir Peter Hawkshaw's cubby-hole at five o'clock in the morning.

We had a pleasant journey to Plymouth, and were troubled with few regrets at leaving London. We expected, in the foolishness of youth, to capture many more such prizes as the *Indomptable* and *Xantippe*. The *Belvidera* was nearly ready, and in a few weeks we sailed on our second cruise. I shall not give the particulars of that cruise. It was such an one as all the officers of his Majesty's service were

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

engaged in, during those eventful years. We were constantly at sea; we kept a tireless lookout for our enemies, and hunted and pursued them into their own harbors. We never slept for more than four hours at a time, in all our cruising. We lived on beef and biscuit for months at a time; sometimes we had scurvy in the ship, and sometimes we did not. We struggled with mighty gales, that blew us hundreds and even thousands of miles out of our course; and we sweltered in calms that tried men's souls. In all that time, we watched night and day for the enemy, and, when found, chased him, and never failed to get alongside when it was possible; and we fought him with the greatest good-will. We had good and ill fortune with the ship, but her colors were never lowered. And it was five years before we set foot in London town again.

Only a year of that time was Giles Vernon with me. He then got promotion which took him out of the ship. I had the extreme good fortune to be with Nelson at the Nile. On that great day, as sailing-master of the *Belvidera*, I took the frigate around the head of Admiral

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Villeneuve's line,— she was the leading ship,— and placed her where she was enabled to fire the first raking broadside of the battle. I got a wound in the forehead which left a scar that remains to this day; but I also received the personal thanks of my Lord Nelson, which I shall ever esteem as the greatest honor of my life. I had heard nothing of Giles for nearly a year, when, among Admiral Villeneuve's officers, I found one, a young lieutenant like myself, who told me that Giles had been captured, while on a boat expedition, and was then in prison at Dunkerque.

I wrote him a dozen letters at least, by officers who were paroled; and when the ship was paid off, the following spring, I lost no time in getting to London, and using what little power I had in trying to have him exchanged. Sir Peter was in great favor at the Admiralty. As soon as I reached London, I went immediately to call in Berkeley Square. My Lady Hawkshaw was at home, and received me in great state, black feathers and all; and with her sat Daphne Carmichael.

I believe Lady Hawkshaw was really glad

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

to see me; but Daphne, after speaking to me, remained with her eyes fixed on her embroidery. I noted, however, that she was a very charming girl, and her eyes, under her long, dark lashes, were full of fire and sweetness. But she had not, and never could have, the glorious beauty of Lady Arabella Stormont. Lady Hawkshaw demanded of me a particular account of my whole cruise, and everything that had happened at the battle of the Nile. This I gave, to the best of my ability. She then invited, or, rather, commanded me to take up my quarters in Berkeley Square, and told me that I had three thousand and ten pounds, nineteen shillings and seven-pence to my credit in bank.

After this, she was called upon to leave the room for a moment, and I civilly inquired of Daphne how Lady Arabella was.

“She is well,” responded Daphne, rather tartly, I thought; “and as devoted to Captain Overton as ever. You know Arabella ever liked him rather more than he liked her.” At which ungenerous speech, I said one word, “Fie!” and Daphne, coloring to the roots of her hair, yet attempted to defend herself.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“I only tell you what all the world says, and so say my uncle and aunt. Arabella could have married a dozen times,—she is all of twenty-one, you know,—and married very splendidly, but she will not. Sir Peter rages, and swears that he will marry her off in spite of herself; but Arabella is her own mistress now, and laughs at Sir Peter.”

“And does she still play cards?”

Daphne raised her eyes. It seemed to give that otherwise sweet girl positive pleasure to call over Lady Arabella’s faults.

“Yes,” she said. “Loo, lansquenet — anything by which money can be lost or won. Three times a week she goes to the Duchess of Auchester’s, where play is high. We go there to-night; but I do not play.”

I had not thought there was so much malice in Daphne, until that conversation.

I left my adieux for Lady Hawkshaw, and repaired to the Admiralty, where Sir Peter happened to be, that day. I explained that I should have come to him at once, but for my inordinate wish to see Lady Hawkshaw; and that I found her looking at least twenty years

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

younger since we met last. At which Sir Peter beamed on me with delight, and, I believe, mentally determined to give me a thousand pounds additional, in his will.

I then stated my real business, which was to get Giles Vernon exchanged; and Sir Peter, without a moment's hesitation, agreed to do all he could for me; and then, as usual, directed me to have my portmanteau sent to Berkeley Square, as Lady Hawkshaw had done. Before I left the Admiralty, machinery had been put in motion to secure Giles Vernon's exchange. I returned to Berkeley Square, and again took up my abode there.

VII

One month from the time I arrived in London, I was on my way to Portsmouth to meet Giles Vernon, who had been brought over with a batch of exchanged officers from France.

In that month, during which I had lived continuously in Berkeley Square, things were so little changed, except in one respect, which I shall mention presently, that I could scarcely persuade myself five years had passed. Peter and Polly, as Giles disrespectfully called them, had not grown a day older, and quarreled as vigorously as ever. Lady Arabella was then her own mistress, although still living under Sir Peter's roof; but, as far as I could see, this spoiled child of nature and fortune had always been her own mistress. I found that Overton had been away for some years on foreign service, and, after distinguishing himself greatly, had lately returned suffering from severe wounds and injuries to his constitution. He was, however, in London, and able to ride

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and walk out, and visit his friends; but it was doubted by many whether, on the expiration of his leave, he would ever be fit for duty again.

I heard and saw enough to convince me that Lady Arabella had been wild with grief and despair when she heard of his wounds; and, although since his return to London he avoided company generally, she managed to see him occasionally, and spent much of her time driving in the parks upon the mere chance of seeing him taking his daily ride or walk. Lady Arabella Stormont had everything in life that heart could wish, except one. She had chosen to give her wilful and wayward heart to Philip Overton, and it must be acknowledged that he was a man well fitted to enchain a woman's imagination. Overton had disdained the spontaneous gift of Arabella's love; but I believe her haughty and arrogant mind could never be brought to believe that any man could be really insensible to her beauty, her rank, and her fortune. Overton could not in any way be considered a great match for her. His fortune was modest, and his chance of succeeding to the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Vernon estates remote; but, with the desperate perversity of her nature, him she would have and no other. It always seemed to me as if Overton were the one thing denied her, but that she had determined to do battle with fate until she conquered her soul's desire.

For myself, she treated me exactly as she had done five years before,—called me Dicky in her good humors, and a variety of sneering names in her bad humors,—and, little as it may be believed, I, Richard Glyn, lieutenant in his Majesty's sea-service, with three thousand pounds to my name, would have gone to the gibbet rather than marry Lady Arabella, with her thirty thousand pounds.

Perhaps Daphne Carmichael had something to do with it. She was the same gentle, winning creature at nineteen as at twelve. She was still Sir Peter's pet, and Lady Hawkshaw's comfort; but I had not been in the house a week before the change I alluded to came about, and the change was in me concerning Daphne. I began to find it very hard to keep away from her. She treated me with great kindness before others, but when we were alone together, she

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

was capricious. I began to despair of ever finding a woman who could be kind to a man three times running. And I was very much surprised at the end of a fortnight to find myself experiencing the identical symptoms I had felt five years before, with Arabella — only much aggravated. There was this difference, too. I had admired Arabella as a star, afar off, and I think I should have been very much frightened, if, at the time, she had chosen formally to accept my devotion. Not so with Daphne. I felt I should never be really at ease until I had the prospect of having her by my side the rest of my life. I reached this phase at the end of the third week. At the end of the fourth, I was in a desperate case, but it was then time to go to Portsmouth to meet Giles, according to my promise, and I felt, when I parted from Daphne, as if I were starting on a three years' cruise, and I was only to be gone a day and a half. She, dear girl, showed some feeling, too, and I left, bearing with me the pack which every lover carries,— pains and hopes.

I left London at night, and next morning on

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

reaching Portsmouth, as I jumped from the coach, I ran into Giles' arms; he had reached Portsmouth some hours in advance of the time.

He showed marks of his imprisonment in his appearance, but his soul had ever been free, and he was the same brave and joyous spirit I had ever known. Not being minded to waste our time in Portsmouth, we took coach for London town at noon. As we were mounting, a countryman standing by held up a wooden cage full of larks, and asked us to buy, expatiating on their beautiful song.

"I will take them all, my lad," cried Giles, throwing him a guinea. The fellow gaped for a moment, and then made off as fast as his legs could carry him. I wondered what Giles meant to do with the birds. He held the cage in his hand until we had started and were well into the country; then, opening the little slide, he took out one poor, fluttering bird, and, poising on his finger for a moment, the lark flew upward with a rush of joyous wings.

Each bird he liberated in the same way, all of us on the coach-top watching him in silence. As the last captive disappeared in the blue

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

heavens, Giles, crushing the cage in his strong hands, threw it away.

“I have been a prisoner for fourteen months,” he said, “and I shall never see any harmless living thing again imprisoned without trying to set it free.”

We reached London that night, and Giles went to his old lodgings, where his landlady was delighted to see him, as all women were who knew Giles Vernon. She gave us supper, and then we sat up all night talking. I had thought from the guinea he had thrown the vender of larks, that he had money. I found he had none, or next to none.

“And how I am to live until I get another ship, I am at a loss, my boy,” he cried, quite cheerfully. “Two courses are open to me — play and running away with an heiress. Do you know of a charming girl, Dicky, with something under a hundred thousand pounds, who could be reconciled to a penniless lieutenant in his Majesty’s navy? And remember, she must be as beautiful as the dawn besides, and of good family, and keen of wit — no lunkhead of a woman for me.” To this, fate impelled me to

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

reply that Lady Arabella Stormont was still single.

“Faith!” cried Giles, slapping his knee, “she is the girl for me. I always intended to marry her, if only to spite her.”

I was sorry I had raked up the embers of his passion of five years before, and attempted to cover my step by saying,—

“She is still infatuated with Overton, whom, however, she sees rarely, and that only at the houses of others; but he has ever looked coldly upon her.”

“She’ll not be coldly looked on by me. And let me see: there is her cousin you used to tell me about,—the Carmichael girl,—suppose you, Dicky, run away with her; then no two lieutenants in the service will have more of the rhino than we!”

I declare this was the very first time I had remembered Daphne’s thirty thousand pounds. She had the same fortune as Lady Arabella. The reflection damped my spirits dreadfully.

Giles saw it directly, and in a moment he had my secret from me. He shouted with delight, and immediately began a grotesque

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

planning for us to run away with the two heiresses. He recalled that the abduction of an heiress was a capital crime, and drew a fantastic picture of us two standing in the prisoners' dock, on trial for our lives, with Lady Arabella and Daphne swearing our lives away, and then relenting and marrying us at the gallows' foot. And this tale, told with the greatest glee, amid laughter and bumpers of hot brandy and water, had a singular effect upon me. It sobered me at once, and suddenly I seemed to see a vision, as Macbeth saw Banquo's ghost, passing before my very eyes,— just such a scene as Giles described. Only I got no farther than the spectacle of Giles a prisoner in the dock, on trial for his life. My own part seemed misty and confused, but I saw, instead of the lodging-house parlor, a great hall of justice dimly lighted with lamps, the judges in their robes on the bench, one with a black cap on his head, and Giles standing up to receive sentence. I passed into a kind of nightmare, from which I was aroused by Giles whacking me on the back and saying in a surprised voice,—

“What ails you, Dicky boy? You look as

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

if you had seen a ghost. Rouse up here and open your lantern jaws for a glass of brandy and rid yourself of that long face."

I came out of this singular state as quickly as I had gone into it, and, ashamed to show my weakness to Giles, grew merry, carried on the joke about the abduction, and shortly felt like myself, a light-hearted lieutenant of twenty-one. I proposed that we should go to the play the next night,—or rather that night, for it was now about four in the morning,—and shortly after we tumbled into bed together and slept until late the next day.

Giles and I went to Berkeley Square in the afternoon, professing just to have arrived from Portsmouth. Giles expressed his thanks in the handsomest manner to Sir Peter for his kindness, and made himself, as usual, highly agreeable to Lady Hawkshaw. Neither Lady Arabella nor Daphne was at home, but came in shortly after Giles had left. Lady Arabella made some slighting remark about Giles, as she always did whenever opportunity offered. Daphne was very kind to me, and I gave her to understand privately that I was ready to

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

haul down my flag at the first summons to surrender.

The family from Berkeley Square were going to the play that night, and I mentioned that Giles and I would be there together. And so, just as the playhouse was lighting up, we walked in. After the curtain was up, and when Mrs. Trenchard was making her great speech in *Percy*, I motioned Giles to look toward Lady Hawkshaw's box. Her ladyship entered on Sir Peter's arm; his face was very red, and he was growling under his breath, to which Lady Hawkshaw contributed an obligato accompaniment in a sepulchral voice; and behind them, in all the splendor of her beauty, walked Lady Arabella, and last, came sweet, sweet Daphne.

The first glimpse Giles caught of Lady Arabella seemed to renew in an instant the spell she had cast on him five years before. He seemed almost like a madman. He could do nothing but gaze at her with eyes that seemed starting out of his head. He grew pale and then red, and was like a man in a frenzy. It was all I could do to moderate his voice and his looks

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

in that public place. Luckily, Mrs. Trenchard being on the stage, all eyes were, for the time, bent on her.

I hardly knew how we sat the play out. I had to promise Giles a dozen times that the next day I would take him to Berkeley Square. When the curtain went down, he fairly leaped his way out of the playhouse to see Lady Arabella get into the coach.

That was a fair sample of the way he raved for days afterward. He haunted Berkeley Square, where he was welcomed always by Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw, asked to dine frequently, and every mark of favor shown him.

Lady Arabella remained cold and indifferent to him. About that time Overton appeared a little in his old haunts, although much changed and sobered. Neither wounds nor illness had impaired his looks and charms, but rather he had become an object of interest and sympathy from his gallant behavior in the field. Sir Peter, who had always liked him, began to pester him to come to Berkeley Square, which he did a few times, because he could not well decline Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw's press-



CLARENCE F. UNDERWOOD

She suddenly fell into my arms. *Page 145*

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

ing and friendly invitations. I believed, however, that in spite of his forced composure he felt cruelly abashed before Lady Arabella. She, however, showed an amazing coolness, and even began to be a little kind to Giles, from some obscure motive of her own. I believe every act of her life with regard to men had some reference to her passion for Overton.

All this time, though, from the night of the play, Daphne and I had been secretly happy; for on the very next day, catching her alone, I told her, in plain and seamanlike language, that I loved her, and when she showed a disposition to cut and run, I said to her, very boldly,—

“Since you scorn my love, I have the resource that every one of my calling has in these days. I shall soon go to sea, and upon the deck of my ship I can find death, since life is nothing to me without my Daphne’s love.”

At which, without the least warning, she suddenly fell into my arms, crying,—

“You’ll break my heart, if you talk in that way!” and I perceived that she was only manoeuvring for position.

I do not know exactly what happened next,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

except I was in that heaven, Daphne's arms, when I looked up and caught the butler and two footmen grinning at me. But it mattered not.

Next morning Daphne and I met in the drawing-room, as usual, after breakfast; but what a meeting it was! We had barely time to scuttle back to our chairs when Sir Peter entered with the newspaper, and informed me that the *Bellona* frigate was being fitted for the West Indies, and he thought he could get me a berth in her, at which I felt myself grow weak in the knees, so great is the power of love.

Presently he went out. Then Daphne and I began to speculate upon Sir Peter's personal equation in our affairs.

"He will never let me marry you," she said.
"He will say I am too young."

This depressed me so that I could say nothing in reply. Daphne continued, quite in an offhand manner,—

"If we should elope, he would make a great hullabaloo."

This admirable suggestion at once commended itself to me.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“His hullabaloo could not separate us, if we were married,” I replied.

“True,” said Daphne; “and after all, he and Lady Hawkshaw as good as eloped, and she was but eighteen — a year younger than I.”

Thus was I supplied with another argument.

I again swear that I had not a thought of Daphne’s fortune in all this. I would have taken the dear girl with nothing but the clothes upon her back.

True to his word, Sir Peter worked like a Trojan to get me a berth on the *Bellona*, and, meaning to do Giles the greatest service in the world, tried likewise for him; and mightily afraid we were that he would soon succeed.

This brought matters to a crisis with Daphne. I mentioned the word “elope” to her again, and she made a great outcry, after the manner of young women, and then began straightway to show me precisely how it might be done, protesting, meanwhile, that she would never, no, never, consent. We both agreed, though, that it was proper we should lay the matter of our marriage before Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw; but I saw that Daphne, who was of a romantic

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

turn, had her imagination fired by the notion of an elopement.

“A pair of good horses and a light traveling chaise!” she exclaimed. “If only it were not wrong!”

“No, no! Four horses!” cried I, “and there is nothing wrong in either a two or a four horse chaise.”

Daphne clapped her hands.

“A trip to Scotland — I have always longed for Scotland. I know a dozen people who have married in Scotland, and happy marriages, every one of them. But I forbid you, Richard, to think of an elopement.”

“We shall set out at midnight; we shall not be missed until morning, and we shall have at least twelve hours’ start. Then, at every stage, we shall leave something behind, which will ensure a broken axle, or a linchpin gone, for our pursuers.”

We were both so charmed with the picture we had conjured up, that when I said, “Suppose, after all, though, that Sir Peter consents?” Daphne’s face fell; but presently she smiled, when I said,—

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“If he does consent, why, then, there is no harm in our marrying any way we like, and he will excuse us for running away. And if he does *not* consent, there is no help for it,—we *must* elope!”

I considered myself a casuist of the first order. I felt obliged to take the first opportunity of letting Sir Peter know the state of affairs, and, as usual, I determined to begin through Lady Hawkshaw.

“And,” as Daphne shrewdly remarked, “they will certainly differ, so we shall at least have one of them on our side.”

I sought Lady Hawkshaw, and found her in her usual place, in the Chinese room. I began, halting, stammering, and blushing, as if I were a charity school-boy, instead of a lieutenant in his Majesty’s service, who had been thanked by Lord Nelson.

“M-m-my lady,” I stuttered, “I have experienced so much k-k-kindness from you that I have come to you in the greatest emergency of my life.”

“You want to get married,” promptly replied Lady Hawkshaw.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I was so staggered by having the words taken out of my mouth, that I could only gape and stare at her. To render my confusion worse, she added,—

“And you want to marry Daphne.”

“I can not deny it, Madam,” I managed to say.

“Will you ring the bell?” she asked.

I rang the bell like a churchwarden, and the footman came, and Lady Hawkshaw immediately sent him for Sir Peter.

I think my courage would wholly have given out at that, except for a glimpse of Daphne, flitting up the stairs. The dear girl wished to give me heart, so she told me afterward.

Sir Peter appeared, and was greeted by Lady Hawkshaw as follows:—

“Sir Peter, here is Richard Glyn wanting to marry Daphne. He has but three thousand pounds; but she might go farther, and fare worse.”

Sir Peter literally glared at me. He gasped once or twice, then broke out in a torrent.

“He wants to marry my ward, does he — my ward, with thirty thousand pounds, in her own

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

right! I wonder, damme, he didn't propose to marry Arabella, too. Young gentleman, you are too modest. Heiresses in England go about hunting for poor lieutenants to marry. I suppose you think it would be a fine stroke for me to marry my ward to my nephew! Ha, ha! Ho, ho!"

His laughter was demoniac.

"Sir Peter," said Lady Hawkshaw severely, — for I remained mute,—"I am astonished at your violence and unreason. Did you never hear of an heiress — and a fine, handsome girl, too, with many accomplishments, and of a great family — marrying a poor lieutenant without a penny, and without an ancestor?"

"By Jupiter, I never did!" roared Sir Peter.

"Then, Sir Peter," cried Lady Hawkshaw, rising with awful dignity, "you forget all about Lieutenant Peter Hawkshaw and the Honorable Apollonia Jane Howard."

At this, Sir Peter fairly wilted for a few moments; and I heard something strangely like a tittering in the next room.

But Sir Peter presently recovered himself in a measure.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“But — but — there are lieutenants and lieutenants, Madam. I was considered a man likely to rise. And besides, if I remember rightly, I was not an ill-looking fellow, Madam.”

“Sir Peter, you were no taller then than you are now — five feet four inches. Your hair was red, and you were far from handsome. Richard Glyn is as good-looking as you ever were in your life; and he has already made his mark. Richard Glyn,” turning to me, “you are at liberty to marry Daphne Carmichael.”

“Richard Glyn,” bawled Sir Peter, “if you dare to *think* you are going to marry Daphne Carmichael,—mind, I say, if the thought ever enters your damned head,—it will be as much as your life is worth! I am going, this moment, to the First Lord of the Admiralty, to see if I can’t have you sent to the West Indies, or the Gold Coast, with my best wishes and endeavors to keep you there for ten years at least.”

“And what will you do with *me*, dear Uncle Peter?” suddenly asked a soft voice; and Daphne, who had stolen into the room (she

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

must have been very near), stood before him, and nestled her pretty head against his shoulder:

Sir Peter was too astonished, for a moment or two, to speak. The whole thing had fallen upon him like the shock of an earthquake. But in a little while he recovered his voice, and all of his voice, too; he shouted as if he were on the bridge of the *Ajax*, with a whole gale blowing, and the enemy in sight.

“Do!” he shrieked. “What shall I do? Bread and water, miss, for six months! Discipline, miss!” And much more of the same sort.

This roused Lady Hawkshaw to take our part. She shouted back at Sir Peter; and I, not to be outdone, shouted that Daphne was mine, and I was hers, as long as life should last; and presently Sir Peter flung out, in a royal rage, and Lady Hawkshaw flung after him; and Daphne sank, in tears, on my shoulder, and I kissed her a hundred times, and comforted her. But I knew Sir Peter was a determined man, in some respects; and I felt assured he would shortly carry out his threat to send me to sea, and, once at sea, it might

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

be years before I should again set foot in England. Scotland, then, sounded sweetly in our ears. I found, in truth, that when it came actually to going off, Daphne's romantic willingness changed to a natural hesitation at so bold a step. But the near prospect of going to the *Bellona* turned the scale in my favor, and I won from her a sort of oblique consent. And another thing seemed to play directly into our hands. Sir Peter had business at Scarborough, which might detain him some time; and, although it was late in the autumn, he determined to take his family with him. I believe it was by way of separating Daphne and me that he came to the decision. Lady Hawkshaw was to go, and his two wards; and they were to remain a month. This was so obviously showing us the road across the border, that I told my sweet Daphne, plainly, I should carry her off; at which she wept more, and protested less, than I had yet seen her.

In the whole affair, I had counted upon the assistance of Giles Vernon; and on the very night the party left for Scarborough, after a tearful farewell between Daphne and me, I

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

went to Giles' lodgings, to make a clean breast of it.

Giles' voice called me up stairs; and when I reached his room, there, spread out on the bed, I saw a beautiful suit of brown and silver.

"Do you see that?" cried Giles. "That is my wedding suit. For it I spent fifty of the last hundred pounds I had in the world, and it is to marry Lady Arabella Stormont that I bought it."

I thought he was crazy, but I soon perceived there was method in his madness. He told me seriously enough that he meant to carry off Lady Arabella Stormont from Scarborough.

"But — but — she does not like you," I said, hesitating and amazed.

"We shall see about that, my lad," he said, and then began to tell me of what he thought a great change in his favor with Arabella. He put many trifling things which I had not noted in such a light that under his eloquent persuasion I began to believe Lady Arabella really might have a secret weakness for him, which pride prevented her from discovering. He had never failed to win any woman's regard yet;

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and it had always seemed a miracle to me, Richard Glyn, who had fallen under his spell so many years ago, how anybody could resist him. He wound up his argument by saying, in his usual confident manner,—

“Trust me, there is something compelling in the love I feel for Arabella. Women are all alike, my boy. They want a master. Once put the bit in their mouths, and they adore you for it. Let me have the spirit to run away with that adorable creature, and see how quickly she will come to my call. You will shortly see her clinging to me like peaches to a southern wall.”

“And her fortune?”

“She is none the worse for that. But I swear to you, Dicky Glyn, that I would carry her off as the Romans did the Sabine maidens, if she had not a shilling,”—which I believed to be true; for his was an infatuation which takes account of nothing.

He then began to tell me of his plans, and in them he showed his usual shrewdness and boldness. The trip to Scarborough had put Scotland in his head. He was likely to be sent to sea any day, to be gone, perhaps, for years:

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

just the arguments I had used to myself first and to Daphne afterward.

I remembered that scene five years before, with Overton and Lady Arabella in Sir Peter's cubby-hole; and the memory of it made me think with dread of Giles Vernon's marrying Arabella. But I could not speak openly; and, after all, she was so strange a creature that one could scarcely judge her by the standard of other women. And then the plan I had to confide to him very effectually withdrew the charges of any battery I might have brought to bear on him.

When he had finished his tale, and I had told mine, Giles was in an ecstasy. He laughed in his uproarious good humor.

"Oh, you sly dog!" he shouted. "So you are up to the same game!"

I explained that I had not much to fear. Daphne was undoubtedly fond of me, and Lady Hawkshaw being on our side, and other reasons in our favor,—all of which fitted Giles' case exactly. And at last I gave up, in sheer despair, and agreed to Giles' suggestion that we should together carry off the two damsels of

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

our hearts; and then and there we made our plans, sitting up until the gray dawn came.

Oh, the madness of it! the wildness of it! But we were two dare-devil and happy-go-lucky lieutenants, without the prudence of landmen. We loved, and we were liable at any moment to be torn away for many years from the idols of our hearts. Runaway marriages were common; and only the parents and guardians were offended in those cases, and forgiveness generally followed. We were about to commit a great folly; but we thought we were nobly sustaining the reputation of his Majesty's sea-officers for our spirit and gallantry with the fair sex, and looked not to the dreadful consequences of our desperate adventure.

VIII

Giles Vernon and I agreed that it was necessary we should strike the blow as soon as possible, while we had the weather-gage, so to speak, of Sir Peter; and on the day after his traveling chariot took its way north, a very plain post-chaise followed it, and in it were Giles Vernon and myself.

Giles was in a state of the wildest happiness conceivable. There is something appalling in that fervor of mind when the human creature, forgetting all the vicissitudes of this life, treads on air and breathes and lives in Heaven. Thus I was made sad by his gladness, but I dared not show it, lest it be mistaken for a want of spirit in our enterprise, so I joined with him in his joy and revelry.

We reached Scarborough at four o'clock in the afternoon, and put up at a small inn on the outskirts of the town, and some little way on the road to the north. We sallied forth immediately to find out something about our in-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

amoras, and Fate — whether it was that kindly goddess who leads our footsteps toward those we love, or whether it was the cruel Destiny which delights in torturing men — at once directed us. We were walking along near the playhouse, which had been lately opened in the town, when we saw James, Lady Hawkshaw's own footman, go inside the playhouse and buy some tickets of the man at the door. As soon as he was well out of the way I sneaked in, and, thrusting two shillings into the man's hand, inquired if Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw and the young ladies would favor the performance that night. The man grinned and showed me a slip of paper, on which was written in Lady Hawkshaw's bold hand, "Three stalls for Lady Hawkshaw and party."

This made me hope that Sir Peter would not be present, for I thought our chances of getting off would materially improve if he were not on the spot.

The play was to be over at half-past ten, and it may be imagined that we had plenty to do until then. We engaged four of the best pairs of nags in the town. We arranged to pay the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

postboys according to the time they took us over the border, and we felt in ourselves the strength of Titans, to overcome whatever resistance might be offered. Of course we counted on the surprise, and we determined that the best disposition to make of Lady Hawkshaw was for Giles Vernon to appear suddenly, when the people were coming out, place Lady Hawkshaw in her coach, and then make that bold dash for love and beauty which we had determined upon. Our postboys, who were not new to the perils of elopements, grinned at the prospect, and were instructed to remain near Lady Hawkshaw's coach and impede it as much as possible, so that it might be the last to reach the door of the theater.

Our arrangements were complete by eight o'clock, and from that hour until ten we employed ourselves in disposing of a good supper at the tavern. We were in a gale of rapture then. It seemed to us both as if we were in that happy and exultant mood, when the enemy is within gun-shot and the ship is cleared for action; and we only awaited the signal for victory. We had some punch, but both Giles

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and myself knew enough to be exceedingly careful in attacking it.

“Dicky, my lad,” cried Giles, banging me in the back, “this day is the anniversary of the day we whipped the *Indomptable* and the *Xantippe*!”—and so it was. “So we shall capture the *Indomptable*, in the Lady Arabella, and we will disable the *Xantippe*,—ha! ha!—in my Lady Hawkshaw.”

This I thought a very fine joke indeed, and we drank to it.

“Dicky,” began Giles again, wiping his mouth after the punch, “I never thought I could be constant to any woman, as I have been to Arabella. By Heaven, the whole sex is so seductive that it was the last one I saw I loved the best. But since I knew that witch of a girl, St. Anthony himself could not be more impervious to female charms than your humble servant,” which was true enough. “And as for Overton,—that psalm-singing devil,—I defy him. Give me but a week, and he shall see Arabella hanging upon me so fondly! Let him have her thirty thousand pounds; ’tis so much dirt and dross to me. And she may be Lady

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Vernon yet. Do you know that old rascalion Sir Thomas Vernon's estate is in this part of the country? though nearer York than Scarborough. On our return from our honeymoon I have a great mind to take my Arabella to Vernon Court, and show her what may one day be hers."

So he raved and roared out snatches like,—

"In Bacchus' joys I'll freely roll,
Deny no pleasure to my soul,
Let Bacchus' health round freely move;
For Bacchus is the friend of love—
And he that will this toast deny,
Down among the dead men let him lie."

And I took up the chorus and bawled it out; for I, too, looked for no more crosses in this life, having Daphne for my wife.

So the time passed until ten o'clock; and at ten o'clock we sallied forth.

It was a starlit night in early December. The cold high blue heavens above us seemed to radiate happiness; the myriad stars twinkled with joy; we scarce felt the ground under our feet.

The two post-chaises awaited us on the high-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

way, the postboys full of confidence; the horses, the best in the town, were eager to be off. We jumped together in one, and were whirled into the town, and were at the door of the playhouse almost before we knew it.

One of our postilions speedily found the coach which had brought Lady Hawkshaw there, and, in pursuance of his instructions, got the coachman off his box to drink in a neighboring tavern, while one of our postboys stood watch over the horses. Giles and I remained in the chaise until it was time for us to make our descent.

At half-past ten the play was over, and then began that hurry and commotion of the dispersion of a crowd in the darkness. We heard loud shouts for Lady Hawkshaw's coach, but the coachman did not make his appearance. There were many officers and ladies from the garrison, and a number of equipages; but soon they were driving off, while half a dozen men at once were shouting for Lady Hawkshaw's coach. At last my lady herself came out of the entrance, followed by Arabella and Daphne, and at that moment Giles slipped out of the chaise,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and appeared before Lady Hawkshaw as if he had risen from the earth. I, too, was on the ground, but out of sight.

"Pray, my lady," said he, in his most gallant manner, and hat in hand, "allow me to show you to your coach."

"Mr. Vernon!" cried Lady Hawkshaw, in surprise. "I thought you were in London. How came you to Scarborough?"

"By chaise, Madam," he replied politely; "and I hope to see the young ladies before I leave," (the hypocrite!). "Is Sir Peter with you, Madam?"

"No, he is not," replied Lady Hawkshaw, her wrath rising at the idea. "Had he been with me, my coach would have been awaiting me." And then turning to Arabella and Daphne, who were behind her, she said sternly,—

"Arabella and Daphne, this does not happen again. Sir Peter comes with us to the play, after this."

I caught sight, from a corner behind the chaise, of my dear Daphne, at that moment. She stopped suddenly, and turned pale and then

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

rosy, and glanced wildly about her. She knew I was not far off.

How Arabella received Giles' sudden appearance I never knew, as I could not see her. But in another moment he had placed Lady Hawkshaw, with the utmost obsequiousness, in the coach; then folding up the steps like magic, he slammed the door, and shouting to the coachman, "Drive on!" the coach rattled off, and the next moment his arm was around Arabella, and mine was around Daphne, and they were swept off their feet; and in less time than it takes to tell it, each of us was with the idol of his heart, whirling off toward Gretna Green, as fast as four horses to a light chaise could take us.

Now, what think you, were Daphne's first words to me?

"Unhand me, Mr. Glyn, or I will scream for assistance!"

"My dearest one!" I exclaimed, "you are now mine. By to-morrow morning we shall be over the border, and you will be my wife."

"An elopement! Gracious heaven! I never thought of such a thing!" she replied.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I might have answered that she had not only thought of such a thing, but talked of it. I refrained, however, knowing a woman's tongue to be capricious in its utterances, and, instead, assured her that my passion was such I could no longer bear the thought of existing without her.

“And do you mean to marry me, sir, without my guardian's consent?” she asked with much violence.

“I do, indeed, my angel, and I thought it was agreed between us.”

This was an unfortunate speech, and she again threatened to scream for assistance, but presently remarked that as there was none to come to her assistance, she would refrain. And then, having done what propriety required, she began to relent a little, and at last she lay in my arms, asking me, with tears, if I would promise her never to love another, and I told her, with great sincerity, that I never would, provided I got out of that alive.

Deep in our own happiness,—for at last the dear girl admitted that she was happy to be mine,—we yet thought of Giles and Arabella,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and I would have got out of the chaise at each of the three stages, where we made a rapid change of horses, except that Daphne would not let me,—afraid, she said, lest I should be recognized and get into trouble. She afterward told me it was because she feared we might be stopped. We did not forget the precaution, in our brief halts, to pay the hostlers well to do some harm to any pursuing vehicles which might be after us; and our plan seemed to be prospering famously.

So all night we rattled furiously along, and at daybreak we crossed the border, notified by the huzzaing of the postboys. It was a dank, dismal morning, the weather having changed during the night, and we saw that we had passed the other chaise in the darkness. It was some distance behind, and the horses seemed much spent. We continued on our way, to the house of a blacksmith at Gretna Green, who, so our postboy told us, usually united runaway couples. We dashed up to his cottage,—a humble place, surrounded by a willow hedge,—and he, warned by approaching wheels, came out, half dressed, in the murky morning.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“Come to be marrit?” he cried. “Step out then.”

I assisted Daphne out of the chaise, and then, as we stood on the damp ground, in those squalid surroundings, looking at each other, the possible wrong I had done this innocent girl suddenly swept over me. And in her eyes, too, I read the first consciousness of having committed an impropriety. This dirty, unkempt blacksmith, the coarse, laughing postboys — this, a way to make the most solemn and spiritual of all engagements! I felt an uncomfortable sense of guilt and shame.

It was only momentary. The more depressed she, the more should I support, and therefore I called out cheerfully, “I take this woman to be my wedded wife,” and such other words as I recalled of the marriage service — and I said it so heartily and promised so devoutly, removing my hat when I made my vows, that it heartened up Daphne — and her response, so full of faith and love, gave a kind of holiness to it all. We were two rash and foolish young people — but we loved each other truly, and we made our vows solemnly, determined to keep

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

them. Perhaps that counts for more, in the eyes of God, than all else; at least, we realized the sacredness of our vows.

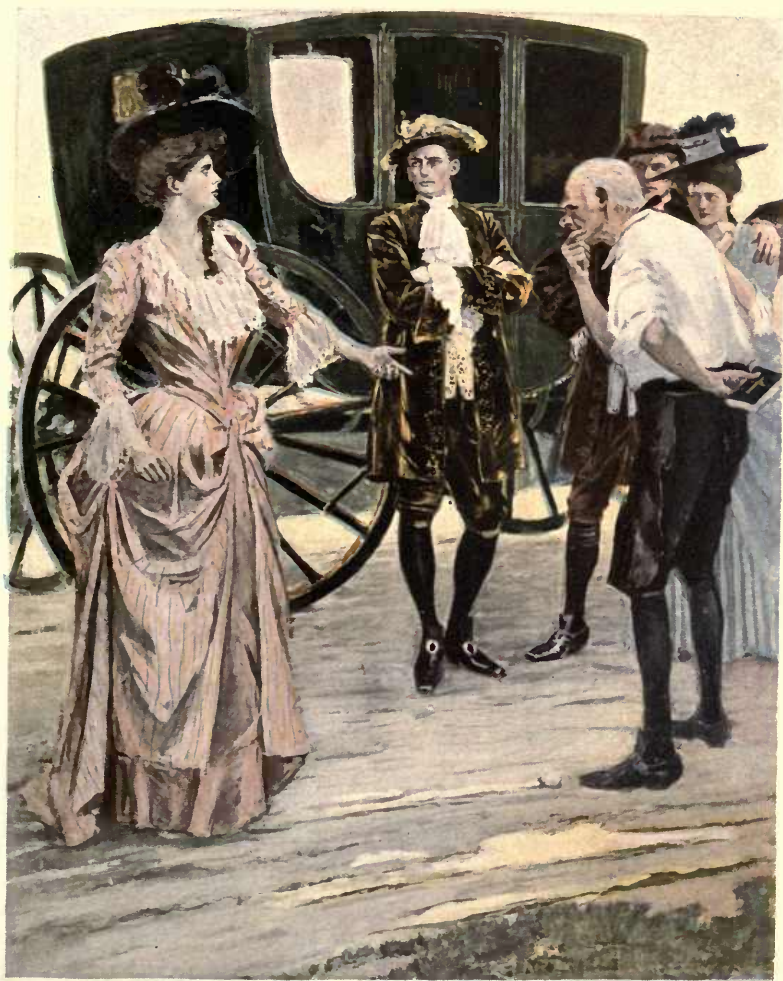
Scarcely was the brief ceremony over — for ceremony we made it — when the chaise containing Arabella and Giles drew up. And the sight I saw, I can never forget.

Arabella's face was quite pale, but her eyes were blazing. There were some drops of blood upon her cheek — they came from her wrists, which Giles held firmly. The door of the chaise being opened, she stepped out willingly, disdaining the assistance Giles offered her. His face, too, was very pale, and he looked and moved like a man in a nightmare. The blacksmith grinned broadly; he thought his gains were to be increased — for I had not forgotten to pay him handsomely.

Giles seized her hand. "Arabella," he cried desperately, "surely you do not now mean to throw me over?"

For answer, she gave him a glance of ineffable hatred.

"This man," she said, turning to me, "your friend, your intimate — I blush for you — has



“Rather would I die than marry him.” *Page 171*

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

dragged me here. Rather would I die than marry him. Look!"

She held up her wrists, and they showed marks of violence.

"'Twas to keep her from jumping out of the chaise," said Giles wildly. "She would have had me leave her at midnight, on the highway — alone and unprotected. Dearest Arabella," he cried, turning to her, and trying to clasp her, "will you not listen to my prayer? How can you scorn such love as mine?" And he was near going down on his knees to her, in the mud — but I held him up. I confess that the most painful thing, of all this painful business, was Giles Vernon's complete surrender of his manhood, under the influence of his wild passion. He, an officer in his Majesty's sea-service, a man who had smelt powder and knew what it was to look Death in the eye and advance upon him, who would have answered with his life for his courage, was ready to grovel in the earth like a madman for the favor of a woman. Nothing was it to him that low-born creatures like the postboys and the blacksmith beheld him with contempt and disgust; nothing to him that

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

a woman like Daphne, and that I, a brother officer, witnessed his degradation. He seemed to have parted with the last semblance of self-respect.

Arabella answered his appeal by a laugh of scorn, which seemed to cut him like a knife; and then, shaking me off, he shouted to her,—

“I know why you will not be mine. It is that pious, hypocritical hound, Overton. But I tell you now, my lady, if you marry him, I’ll have his life. Take note of what I say — I’ll have his life.”

To which Arabella, after a pause in which her face grew deeply red and then pale again, said,—

“Your own life is in jeopardy. The abduction of an heiress is a capital offense, and you shall be tried for your life if it takes every shilling of my fortune to do it. You shall see what you have done!”

I shuddered at these words, for I saw it was no idle threat. If Giles contemplated violence toward Overton, I had not the slightest doubt that Arabella was fully capable of keeping her word in the dreadful business. Daphne thought

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

so too; for she ran forward, and, putting her hands over Arabella's mouth, cried,—

“No, no! dear Arabella, take that back!”

“But I will not take it back,” replied Arabella; “and I shall lodge information against this wretch, as soon as I can return to Scarborough,—which I shall do in the post-chaise; for, luckily, I have money with me.”

Under the terrible threat of prosecution, Giles recovered himself surprisingly. He lost his frantic air, and, drawing himself up, remarked quite calmly,—

“Just as your ladyship pleases.”

His change of manner seemed to infuriate Arabella, who shrieked at him,—

“You shall be hanged for this!”

“Anything to oblige your ladyship,” responded Giles, as cool as you please.

I felt that this painful scene could no longer continue, and said so.

“Lady Arabella,” said I, “my wife”—how Daphne's eyes glowed as I spoke—“and I are returning immediately to Scarborough; you had best go with us; and when you have seen and consulted with Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

it will be time enough to determine upon your course."

"My course is already determined upon," she replied; and no one who saw her could doubt it.

"And so is mine," said Giles, now in possession of all his usual manliness. "I return to London, where I shall duly report myself to the Admiralty, and later to Sir Peter Hawkshaw; and if the lady thirsts for my blood, begad, she can have it."

"Giles Vernon," said I, "you have been unlucky. I can not say more, because I am in the same boat with you. But you have done nothing unworthy of a gentleman, and nothing to make either Daphne or me love you the less, no matter what befalls. So here is my hand upon it."

We grasped hands, and, turning to Daphne, he removed his hat and proceeded to kiss her, saying to me, "By your leave." And Daphne said to him,—

"Good-by, dear Giles."

The proceedings seemed to fill Lady Arabella with disgust. She haughtily refused my hand to assist her into the chaise, and announced that

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

she would go to the village of Springfield, near by, for rest and breakfast; and willy-nilly, Daphne and I had to follow in the post-chaise.

Never shall I forget that dismal wedding journey back to Scarborough. I began, for the first time, to fear the reproaches of the world in general, and Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw in particular, in regard to running away with an heiress. I had one comfort, however; Daphne fully believed in my disinterestedness; and I can sincerely say I wished Daphne's fortune at the bottom of the sea, if I could but have wooed and won her in the ordinary course of events.

Lady Arabella traveled just ahead of us, but took occasion to show her anger and resentment against us in every way.

About half the distance to Scarborough we met full in the road a traveling chariot, and in it were Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw.

We found that the hostlers had earned their money, and that the Hawkshaws' chaise had broken down at least once in every stage.

When we met and stopped, Arabella alighted, and so did we, and so did the Hawk-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

shaws; and the first word that was spoken was by Daphne.

“Uncle Peter,” she said, “don’t fly at Richard. If you must know it, I ran away with him; for I am sure, although he is as brave as a lion, it never would have dawned upon him to run away with me, if I had not put the idea in his head, and kept it there.”

“Sir,” said I, “and Madam,” turning to Lady Hawkshaw, “I beg you will not listen to this young lady’s plea. I am wholly responsible for the circumstances of our marriage. I can, however, and do, call Heaven to witness, that her fortune had nothing to do with it, and I should have been happy and proud to take her, with the clothes on her back, and nothing more.”

Sir Peter began to sputter, but Lady Hawkshaw cut him short.

“Exactly what you said, Sir Peter, within an hour of our marriage.”

Thus were Sir Peter’s guns dismounted.

“And, Richard and Daphne, you are a couple of fools to run away, when, if you had only had a little patience, I would have had you

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

handsomely married at St. George's, Hanover Square. But least said, soonest mended. Sir Peter, kiss Daphne, and shake hands with Richard."

And as I am a sinner, she actually forced Sir Peter to do both, although I saw he mortally hated it.

Arabella's turn came next. She advanced and said, with a bitterness that struck a chill to my heart,—

"Sir Peter, as you know, I was carried off by that wretch who disgraces his uniform, Lieutenant Giles Vernon; but he did not succeed in forcing me to consent to a marriage. And I call upon you, as my next friend, to aid me in the prosecution which I shall immediately set on foot against him for the capital offense of the abduction of an heiress; and I hope to bring him to the gibbet for it."

IX

Lady Arabella Stormont was as good as her word; for that day, two months, Giles Vernon was put upon trial for his life, at York Assizes, for the abduction of an heiress. Sir Peter Hawkshaw refused absolutely to countenance Arabella; and my Lady Hawkshaw, who never had bowed her head or abased her spirit to mortal man or mortal woman before, went upon her knees, imploring Arabella to give over her revenge,—for revenge it was, pure and simple,—but Lady Arabella laughed at her. Lady Hawkshaw rose from her knees, crying out,—

“You have some deep and unknown reason for this; but it will come to naught, it will come to naught!”

But Arabella found a person ready to her hand, who was most active in the matter. This was Sir Thomas Vernon, of Vernon Court. It was he who lodged the information with the public prosecutor against Giles, and assumed the part of Lady Arabella's champion. Of

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

course, there was some ground for the version of the story which was started in Arabella's interest, that a frightful outrage had been committed by dragging her off against her will; and that only the most determined courage had saved her from a marriage repulsive to her; that Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw, her next friends, had basely deserted her; and that Sir Thomas had chivalrously taken up her cause. It is true that the relative characters of the Hawkshaws and Sir Thomas Vernon discounted much of this; but the actual facts in the case looked so ugly for Giles, that there was no trouble in securing his prompt arrest and delivery in York jail.

The breach between Lady Arabella and the Hawkshaws, as well as Daphne and myself, was too great to be bridged over; and, having thrown herself, so to speak, in Sir Thomas Vernon's arms, she accepted the protection of a relative of his, one Mrs. Whitall, a decayed gentlewoman, and went to live at a small town near York, until the Assizes, when she would be called upon as the chief witness for the prosecution. Great stories were immediately put forth that

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Sir Thomas Vernon was deeply smitten with Arabella's charms, and that, after a visit with Mrs. Whitall to Vernon Court, she looked very kindly on Sir Thomas. All this might be true, and Sir Thomas might flatter himself that he had won her favor; but, knowing Arabella well, I did not credit her with any sincere desire to be kind to Sir Thomas Vernon, although she might make him think so, for her own purposes. I suspected, however, a motive far deeper, in any matter connected with Sir Thomas Vernon. Overton was the next heir after Giles; Sir Thomas was extremely rickety, and not likely to be long-lived; and if, by merely telling what had happened, Lady Arabella could sate her resentment, which was deep and furious, against Giles, and at the same time greatly benefit Overton, I think she would not have weighed Giles' life at a penny. My Daphne, whose faith in human nature was angelic, in her belief in ultimate good, prayed and besought Arabella to leave the country before the trial came off; but Arabella only said contemptuously:

“You are a child and a chit. Giles Vernon contemplated doing me the greatest wrong a

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

man can do a woman. Do you think I shall let him go unpunished? If so, how little do you know Arabella Stormont!"

Then I, from loyalty to Giles, and not from any hope I had from Lady Arabella, went to her and made my appeal. She heard all my prayers without the slightest sign of relenting, playing with her lap-dog the while. At last, I said to her,—

"Tell me, at least, who is to be benefited by the conviction of Giles Vernon? Not you, certainly; for you will be loathed and shunned by all."

"The person dearest to me in the world," she replied; "the person I love better than my life or my soul," and then, as if she had admitted too much, she stopped, turned pale, and seemed altogether disconcerted. She had, in truth, admitted too much. The person she had ever loved better than her soul was Philip Overton.

I had the self-possession to leave her then, and went off by myself to think over the strange motive which had been revealed to me. Arabella's infatuation for Overton had always been abnormal, touched with unreason. And could

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

fate have woven a closer web around Giles Vernon than in making him fall so madly in love with Arabella Stormont?

Giles had promptly surrendered himself, rightly judging a trial better than being a fugitive from justice and a deserter from the naval service. He repaired to York, after having duly reported to the Admiralty, and was jailed immediately, and indicted.

The Hawkshaws, my Daphne, and I remained in Scarborough during the two dreadful months that passed before the trial came off. Sir Peter easily got leave from the Admiralty for me, hoping, not only that my testimony, but the example of the felicity in which Daphne and I lived, might not be without its effect upon the jury that tried Giles.

Offers of money to assist in his defense came from many quarters and from several ladies,—two in especial, her Grace of Auchester and Mrs. Trenchard. Lady Hawkshaw, however, claimed the privilege of bearing the expenses of the trial out of her private fortune, which was large. Sir Peter and she had it hot and heavy, he desiring to contribute; and for one

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

of the few times in his life, he carried his point against her. Two great barristers were to be brought from London to assist Giles in his defense, besides another one in York itself.

As soon as Giles was lodged in jail, Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw, Daphne and I went immediately to see him. We drove in state, in a coach and four, with outriders, Sir Peter in his uniform, with his sword, and I also in uniform; for our object was to testify publicly our regard for Giles and detestation of the prosecution for his life which was on foot.

We reached the great gloomy building, and the turnkey immediately showed us to Giles' room. It was one of the best rooms in the place, and would have been comfortable enough had it not been in a prison.

He was delighted to see us, kissed Lady Hawkshaw's hand, and gave Daphne a hearty smack on the cheek. He looked well, and I expected to find him hopeful; but he seemed to regard his fate as fixed, although it in no wise disturbed his cheerfulness. Sir Peter at once told him that everything possible should be done for his defense, and that eminent counsel

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

were then on their way from London for him; and he with Lady Hawkshaw would bear all the costs of the trial.

“And we,” cried Daphne, “claim the right to help; and when you are acquitted, you will find all your debts paid, and need not trouble yourself where the money comes from.”

Tears sprang to Giles’ eyes at this, and he looked gratefully upon us all.

“Dear friends,” he said, “I thank you; but I shall not be acquitted. Sir Thomas Vernon and Lady Arabella Stormont thirst for my blood, and by my own folly I have put the noose around my neck. But I say to you from the bottom of my heart that I rather would die upon the gibbet than be married to Lady Arabella. God was good to me in giving her to me as my enemy instead of my wife.”

There was something in this; for what man could think, without shuddering, of taking Arabella Stormont to wife?

I saw that Giles had completely recovered from his madness. He blamed no one, frankly acknowledging his own folly, and bore himself as became an officer and a gentleman.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Sir Peter would by no means admit there was the smallest chance of an adverse verdict; but although I could not bring myself to believe that the extreme penalty of the law would be carried out, yet I thought it very likely that the case was too plain for Giles to escape conviction. The conduct of Daphne and Lady Hawkshaw to him was such that I came out of the jail with a deeper reverence, a higher esteem for women than I had known before, although I had always believed them to be God's angels on earth (with a few exceptions). So gentle and caressing was Daphne, so boldly and determinedly friendly was Lady Hawkshaw, that it did one's heart good. Daphne announced her intention of going to see Sir Thomas Vernon and pleading with him, while Lady Hawkshaw threatened to give him her opinion of him publicly, which was, indeed, a dreadful threat.

The trial came off at the February Assizes, and on the night before was the great assize ball. The word was passed around that all of Giles Vernon's friends were to attend this ball, by way of showing our confidence — alas! — in

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

his acquittal. Therefore, on that night, we — that is, the Hawkshaws, Daphne, and I — were to go to the ball in all the state we could muster. We had taken lodgings at York for the trial.

The evening of the ball found the streets crowded as I had never seen them before. The great case, which would be reached within a day or two, brought crowds to attend the Assizes, many persons coming even from London. These were chiefly gentlemen of the nobility and gentry who were friends of Giles Vernon's, for never man had so many friends.

It was a cold bright February night; and the street in front of the assize hall where the ball was held was packed with chariots, chaises, and people on foot, flaring torches and bawling footmen, as if it were a London rout. As our carriage passed the entrance, the way was blocked by the judges' chariots, from which they descended in state. Our coachman, whipping up to get the next place in line, locked wheels with the coach of Sir Thomas Vernon. He sat back, his face visible by the lamps in the courtyard, and as unconcerned as if the case which had brought us all to York was one of his servants

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

beating the watch, instead of the trial of his relative and heir on a capital charge.

The crowd showed its disapproval of Sir Thomas by hurling abusive epithets at him, which only caused him to smile. But he had another enemy to encounter, which was Lady Hawkshaw, and in full sight and hearing of the judges, as they stepped with stately tread up the stairs, occurred a battle *a mort* between her and Sir Thomas Vernon, to the intense enjoyment of the crowd, which was uproariously on Lady Hawkshaw's side. Neither Sir Peter nor I took any part in the fray, seeing Lady Hawkshaw had the best of it from the start, and that, woman against man, the populace was heartily with her.

It began by Lady Hawkshaw's putting her head out of the coach and saying at the top of her voice,—and what a voice! —“Good evening, Sir Thomas. We are called here upon a sad occasion, but I hope that English justice will prevail to save the life of that gallant young man, your heir, Giles Vernon.”

To which Sir Thomas, with a wicked grin, replied,—

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“We may safely leave that to the jury and to their honors, the lords justices, Madam. But if a young villain steals an heiress against her will, he incurs the extreme penalty of the law.”

“Yes,” replied Lady Hawkshaw, “I dare say you think the law will deal by Giles Vernon as it did by poor Jack Bassett, whom you got transported for life for killing a hare which was already half dead; or as it served Tobias Clark, the blacksmith, whom you got hanged for stealing one of your sheep.”

These things were true, and the crowd gave three loud groans for Sir Thomas Vernon. Before he could get his breath to reply, Lady Hawkshaw continued,—

“No wonder you are afraid to sleep without candles burning in your room all night, Sir Thomas.”

Sir Thomas ground his teeth, and called,—

“Back your horses, coachman, and drive out.”

But the crowd would by no means permit it, holding on to the wheels, and shouts resounded of “Good for your ladyship! Hawkshaw for ever!”

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Sir Peter lay back laughing, while Daphne, by way of encouraging the people, clapped her hands and kissed Lady Hawkshaw on the cheek.

“And let me tell you, Sir Thomas,” continued that excellent and indomitable woman, “that because no woman could ever be induced to elope with *you*, there is no reason why runaway marriages should not be the happiest in the world. I defied my family and as good as ran away with Sir Peter Hawkshaw, and he was as poor as Giles Vernon; but, like him, he was a true and gallant gentleman, and God bless the day I married him!”

At this there was tremendous cheering for Sir Peter, and he took off his hat and bowed, kissing Lady Hawkshaw’s hand.

Sir Thomas responded by calling out airily,—

“May I ask your ladyship if Sir Peter was a free agent in the affair of your marriage? for I believe he is not generally held accountable for his actions since that day.”

• Sir Peter’s eyes flashed at that, but Lady Hawkshaw cried back,—

“Right you are, Sir Thomas, for have him

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I would, and if he had not agreed to marry me I should have died of disappointment. Nor has he been a free agent since that day,—not for one moment free from my love, my admiration, and my solicitude. I knew you well, Sir Thomas, forty years ago” (this was a cruel thrust, for Sir Thomas was notoriously touchy about his age), “and I would no more have run away with *you* then than I would this night—and God knows no woman in all the three kingdoms would go with you now!”

The delight of the crowd was extraordinary. I believe they would have mobbed Sir Thomas, except that they felt that Lady Hawkshaw could inflict the more exquisite misery on him. The judges, still going up the steps slowly, probably heard every word of this controversy. The crowd then parted, and taking Sir Thomas' horses by the bits, forced them to give place to Lady Hawkshaw's coach, and she descended amid the loudest cheers of the populace.

Within the splendid ball-room Lady Hawkshaw's triumph was even more marked. Numbers of great people flocked around her; many of them had been witnesses of her battle royal

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

with Sir Thomas, and the story had quickly spread to the rest. Lady Hawkshaw, in spite of her oddities, had always maintained the respect of all who knew her, and never saw I a woman who bore, under all circumstances, more unmistakably the air of a great lady; whether squabbling with Sir Peter, laying down the law to the world at large, or speaking bad French, she was invariably the woman of quality.

The scene of the ball was so gorgeous that even my sad heart took note of it. The hall was ablaze with wax lights, and a huge band of musicians brayed and trumpeted. The lords justices, the lords lieutenants of the three Ridings, and many other persons were in full court costumes, and the ladies' trains of brocade and velvet were a sight to see. And I may be pardoned for saying that Mistress Richard Glyn was by no means the least handsome of the women present.

By Lady Hawkshaw's command we were all to look cheerful, and, when I saw the outpouring of popular approval upon us as Giles Vernon's next friends, my heart grew less heavy.

Lady Hawkshaw seated herself in a large

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

chair at the end of the hall, where she held a kind of court. She wore a gown of some sort of crimson stuff, with a great tail to it, and on her head was a turban with a bird of paradise in it, and on top of that, her huge diamond tiara. Everybody flocked to pay her court, and the lord lieutenant of the East Riding asked the honor of her hand to open the ball. She promptly agreed, with the added remark that she had not danced for thirty years. Sir Peter attempted to interpose.

“You can not do it, my lady,” he said.
“You will trip up and break your leg.”

“Not unless you trip me up, Sir Peter,” responded her ladyship, who was totally unable to keep up the turtle-dove style toward Sir Peter for any appreciable length of time. “My legs are as good as the lord lieutenant’s, thank God! and I shall have pleasure in dancing with his lordship.”

Obeying a look from her, Daphne accepted a partner, and I secured one in the lord mayor’s daughter. Sir Thomas Vernon, who was then in the hall, had the ineffable impudence to wish to dance in the country dance with us, but he

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

was met everywhere with cold looks and refusals. The ladies of the lords lieutenants were all engaged; so were their daughters. It was a picture to see him going along the line of ladies sitting against the wall, being repulsed by all, and his composure under these embarrassing circumstances was the most extraordinary thing I ever saw. He wore a smile upon his sickly, but handsome face all the time, and, at last, he found a partner in the person of a monstrous ugly woman, whose husband was in the hides and leather trade.

We took our places, Lady Hawkshaw and the lord lieutenant, a fine, handsome man, many years younger than she, at the head of the room. And then the musicians struck up, and Lady Hawkshaw began to dance.

Such dancing! It was of the kind that was fashionable before the American war, and introduced so many cuts, capers, pigeon-wings, slips, slides, and pirouettes, that it was really an art in itself. And her agility was surprising. With her train over her arm, her tiara blazing, and her bird of paradise nodding violently, Lady Hawkshaw's small high-bred feet

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

twinkled. She was a large woman, too, and she proved that her boast about her legs was well founded. When she came face to face with Sir Thomas Vernon in the dance, instead of turning him, she folded her arms and sailed around him, carefully avoiding touching his hand. And he, the old sinner, being acquainted with that ancient style of dancing, made a caper so exactly like her ladyship's, with so grave a countenance, that the whole ball-room was in a titter. But although the people might laugh at Sir Thomas' excellent mimicry, the sentiment was totally against him, and he found difficulty in getting gentlemen to notice him, or ladies to dance with him. With Lady Hawkshaw, on the contrary, it was every man's desire to dance; she was besieged with partners, young and old; but having shown what she could do, she rested upon her laurels, and sat in state the rest of the evening, fanning herself with vast dignity and composure, and occasionally snapping at Sir Peter, who, it must be admitted, made no great figure at a ball.

At last it was over, and we returned to our lodgings. The next day but one we were on

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

our way to the assize hall for the trial of Giles Vernon.

A tremendous crowd was present, and there was difficulty in gaining an entrance; some one, however, in the multitude set up a shout of "Way for Lady Hawkshaw!" and the people fell back, leaving us a clear path to the door, and into the hall itself.

Within that place of judgment all was dignity and decorum. The lords justices in their robes and wigs sat like statues; and, presently, when we were all seated and the crier had pronounced the court open, Giles Vernon was brought in, and placed in the prisoners' dock. He looked pale from his late confinement, but I thought I had never seen his plain features so nearly handsome. His fine figure was nobly set off by the identical brown and silver suit which the poor fellow had bought for his wedding with Lady Arabella, and, in a flash, came back to me that strange vision I had had at his London lodgings on the night that this unfortunate elopement was first talked of between us. My heart stood still, and I grew sick and faint at the recollection of the rest of that

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

dream, or revelation, or whatever it was.

Giles, meanwhile, had bowed respectfully to the judges, then to the assembled people, who very generally returned his salutation with every mark of politeness. Turning to where we sat, he bowed and smiled. We all rose, and Lady Hawkshaw and Daphne made him deep curtseys. A jury was soon selected and sworn, and the first witness called was Lady Arabella Stormont.

In a moment she entered, leaning upon the arm of Sir Thomas Vernon, and was by him escorted to her place in the witness-box.

Her beauty was almost unearthly. She wore a black gown and a simple white cap, under which the curls of her rich hair shone like burnished gold. She was perfectly composed, and, after being sworn, began her story in a manner the most quiet and calm. A deep stillness reigned through the vast room, and every one in it caught her lowest word.

Her testimony was entirely clear and straightforward. She related the circumstances of her being dragged off, while coming out of the playhouse at Scarborough; of finding herself

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

alone in the chaise with Giles Vernon, who told her he was taking her to Scotland to marry her; that she struggled violently and endeavored to get out of the chaise, and that she was withheld by force by Giles, who severely hurt her wrists, causing blood to flow; and finally, that when she began to scream, Giles put his hand over her mouth and stifled her cries. She said that this conduct was kept up the whole of the night, until they reached Gretna Green at daylight; that all the time Giles was imploring her to marry him, then threatening to kill himself or her; and that she told him many times she preferred death to marriage with him; and at last, on reaching Gretna Green, she defied him and escaped from him.

When she had concluded, there was an ominous stillness for a time, and then I saw something which struck a chill to my heart. I had stealthily kept my eyes fixed on the judges to see whether they gave in their countenances any signs of lenity or severity. They were altogether unmoved, except one, who was reported to be a most merciful man. He grew pale and paler as Lady Arabella's story progressed, and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I saw him several times wipe the cold sweat from his brow, and at last a sigh broke from him; but I think no one noted it but me, for the multitude of people were absorbed in the sight of this beautiful young woman, so coolly swearing away the life of a man who had loved her.

Giles Vernon bore the ordeal unflinchingly, and when at intervals she looked toward him with a quiet hatred in her glance, he gazed steadily back at her.

She was then to be cross-examined. Many questions were asked her by the great London barrister, who was one of the three defending Giles. One query was, whether she had ever given Mr. Vernon reason to think she would marry him, to which she replied,—

“No; never in my life.”

She was then asked if there was another gentleman in the case, and for the first time she showed confusion. Her face grew crimson, and she remained silent. The question was not pressed, and she was soon permitted to retire. When she passed out of the hall, she was the divinest picture of beauty and modesty I ever saw. Her eyes sought the floor, and a delicious

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

blush mantled her cheek. I believe that many persons, under the spell of her beauty, thought that she was an unwilling witness, and pitied her youth and inexperience.

But it was hanging testimony she gave, and well she knew it.

After the examination of the postboys and other witnesses for the prosecution, I was called as the first witness for Giles. I told the circumstances of our agreement to run away with the two charmers of our hearts; and the fact that I had been so readily forgiven, not only by Daphne herself, but by Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw, I saw produced a good effect. But when I was asked by the other side if I had ever seen, or if Giles had ever claimed, any willingness on Lady Arabella's part to go off with him, I broke down miserably. My testimony did Giles but little good, I fear.

Sir Peter Hawkshaw was the next witness. It was plain from the start that he desired to help Giles, and likewise that he knew very little of the affair until it was all over. But he proved a most entertaining, if discursive witness.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Sir Peter evidently thought the witness-box was his own quarter-deck, and he proceeded to harangue the court in his best manner as a flag officer. He talked of everything except the case; he gave a most animated description of the fight between the *Ajax* on our side and the *Indomptable* and *Xantippe* on the other, praising Giles Vernon's gallantry at every turn. He also aired his views on the subject of the flannel shirts furnished to the navy, alleging that some rascally contractors ought to be hanged at the yard-arm for the quality supplied; and wound up by declaring, with great gusto, that if an officer in his Majesty's service desired to marry a young lady, it was an act of spirit to carry her off, and for his part, fellows of that sort were the kind he should select to lead a boarding party, while the sneaking, law-abiding fellows should be under the hatches when the ship was cleared for action.

Sir Peter's rambling but vigorous talk was not without its effect, upon which I think he had shrewdly calculated. In vain counsel for the crown tried to check him; Sir Peter bawled at them to pipe down, and remarked aloud of the



“ That lawyer fellow is three sheets in the wind!” *Page 201*

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

senior counsel who had been most active in trying to suppress him,—

“That lawyer fellow is three sheets in the wind, with the other one a-flapping!”

The judges, out of respect to him, made no great effort to subdue him, and he had the satisfaction of telling his story his own way. When the prosecution took him in hand, they found, though, that he could very well keep to the subject-matter, and they did not succeed in getting anything of the slightest consequence out of him. When he stepped down, I saw that he had in reality done much more good to Giles' cause than I had, although he knew little about the facts, and I knew all.

Then came Lady Hawkshaw's testimony. Sir Peter's was not a patch on it. Like him, she really had no material evidence to give, but, with a shrewdness equal to his, she made a very good plea for the prisoner. She began with a circumstantial account of her own marriage to Sir Peter, in which the opposition of her family was painted in lurid hues. In vain was she again and again checked; she managed to tell her tale against the vigorous objections of the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

prosecutors, and the somewhat feeble and perfunctory rebukes from the bench. The jury, however, were plainly so interested in it, that no serious attempt was made to stop her — not that it would have availed anything, for Lady Hawkshaw was not used to stopping for any one.

“No doubt my family could have hounded Sir Peter for marrying me,” she announced in the beginning, “but my family, your honors, is an honorable one, and would not condescend to nasty tricks like —” Here she fixed her great black eyes on Sir Thomas Vernon, who smiled blandly and took snuff.

“And as for a man expecting opposition in a girl he is willing to marry, I ask your honors, does a man exist who can believe, until it is proved to him beyond cavil, that there is a woman alive who would not jump for joy to marry him?”

This produced so much laughter that the bailiffs had to enforce order in the hall.

Lady Hawkshaw then, with great ingenuity, referred to Sir Thomas Vernon, “who, in those days, forty years ago, was not called ‘Wicked

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Sir Thomas,' but plain 'Lying Tom Vernon'!"

This produced a regular uproar, during which Lady Hawkshaw, with great complacency, fanned herself. After a warning from the presiding justice to keep to the matter in hand, she curtsied deeply to him, and immediately resumed her account of Sir Thomas Vernon, in which she told of a certain occasion, in the time of the American war, when, as the royal family was passing to chapel at Windsor, hisses were heard, which were directly traced to Sir Thomas Vernon, the king having declined to receive him at the levee on account of his notoriously bad character. And Sir Thomas, being thrust out, was taken by some of the inhabitants of Windsor, and ducked in a neighboring horse-pond. At this point, the judge himself courteously but firmly interrupted Lady Hawkshaw, and informed her that she could not be permitted to go on in that strain.

"I shall observe your lordship's caution," she replied politely, and straightway launched into a description of Sir Thomas' appearance when he emerged from the horse-pond, which brought a smile to every face in court — including even

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the judge's — except the victim himself, who bit his lip, and scowled in fury.

The judges afterward said that Lady Hawkshaw proved to be the most unmanageable witness any and all of them had ever encountered; for in spite of them, she gave a circumstantial account of every misdeed Sir Thomas Vernon had ever been guilty of in his life, as far as she knew.

The crown lawyers, very wisely, declined to cross-examine this witness. When she stepped down out of the witness-box and took Sir Peter's arm, she passed close to the presiding justice, who happened to have his snuff-box open in his hand. My lady deliberately stopped and took a pinch out of the judge's box, remarking suavely,—

“Your lordship shows excellent taste in preferring the Spanish!”

I thought his lordship would drop out of his chair.

The evidence being all in, and the arguments made, a recess was taken. We were not the only ones who paid our respects immediately to Giles Vernon. Many persons went forward

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

and shook his hand, while I think Sir Thomas did not receive a cordial greeting from a single man or woman in the hall, although he was known to every one present.

We got a hurried dinner at the tavern, and returned at once to the hall. It was about half-past four in the winter afternoon, and the day being dark and lowering, candles were required. The lord justice's instructions to the jury were then read, and my heart sank, as, in a dreadful monotone, he expounded the law to them. Alas! As long as the statute against the abduction of an heiress remained, Giles Vernon was guilty of a capital crime; and not one word uttered by any one of us who testified in his behalf did aught but prove the more strongly that he had carried Lady Arabella off against her will.

The jury retired, and, the day having been fatiguing, the lords justices determined to wait in their retiring-room for an hour, where they could be called, if the jury promptly reached a verdict. This troubled me — this expectation of a quick decision.

The judges having retired and suspended the sitting of the court, we at once went over and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

sat with Giles, who maintained perfectly his manly composure. He laughed with Sir Peter over some of the events of the fight between the *Ajax* and her two enemies, complimented Lady Hawkshaw upon her triumph over the laws of the land relating to evidence, and said many kind things to Daphne.

While we were in the midst of a cheerful conversation, and not observant of what was going on in the other part of the hall, we suddenly heard the crier proclaiming the entrance of their lordships, and at the same moment Sir Thomas Vernon entered by another door. Hanging on his arm was Lady Arabella Stormont. And then the jury filed in with solemn faces, and what followed all seemed to me like some horrid dream.

Although several persons were moving about, there seemed to me a dreadful silence; and although the candles burned, and a great hobgoblin of a moon peered in at the windows, there seemed an awful darkness. And after a time, in which I was oppressed by this ghostly silence and darkness, I saw the senior lord justice put on a black cap, and sentence Giles Vernon to be

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

hanged by the neck until he was dead, that day fortnight.

My eyes roved aimlessly around, and fell at that moment on Lady Arabella Stormont. A faint smile flickered on her lovely mouth.

X

In that hour of horror, I became weaker and more helpless than the weakest and most helpless woman. Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw were too stunned to think. I remember, now, the look of despair on Sir Peter's countenance, where I had never before seen anything but sturdy courage,—and it was an added terror. And the one who retained her senses, who suggested a forlorn hope, was Daphne,—the youngest, the least experienced of us all.

“To London!” she said. “To the king, for pardon! I myself will go upon my knees to him. He shall—he *shall* pardon Giles!”

We were all huddled together, then, in our parlor at the inn, having just returned from the assize hall.

“Richard and I will go,” said Sir Peter.

“And Daphne and I will stay and comfort Giles,” spoke Lady Hawkshaw.

A week to London, and a week to return, was easy traveling—but how long would it

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

take us to reach the king? And what ministers would be in town? And what would be the earliest moment we could leave London? All these things were in our minds to torment us. Nevertheless, within half an hour, we were on our way.

While we were demanding the best horses, and having them put to, an insolent groom came in the stable-yard, and asked for horses for Sir Thomas Vernon and Lady Arabella Stormont and Lady Arabella's companion, Mrs. Whitall, and two servants, for London. The head hostler replied roughly that they had no time to attend him then, as they were starting Sir Peter Hawkshaw and Mr. Glyn off for London, too, to beg Mr. Giles Vernon's life. The man, at this, grew saucy, and offered a handsome bonus for the horses which were then being put to for us. I caught him by the collar, and threw him out of the stable-yard, where the hostlers drubbed him soundly, thank God!

One hurried kiss to Daphne, a brief farewell between Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw, and we were off for London. Our race into Scotland was nothing to it.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

The roads were much cut up, and although we traveled day and night, we were more than four days on the way. We reached London early in the day; and, without stopping for food, or to change our linen, we went to the Admiralty. There we got the information that the First Lord was visiting in the country, in Kent. Within the hour, I was on my way to Kent. When I reached the place, the First Lord had left, not more than two hours before, for London. I had passed him on the road, without knowing him. I returned to London. Sir Peter had seen several members of the government, meanwhile, and had been privately informed that the king was suffering mentally; and although hopes were entertained that the spell would pass away, without the necessity of informing the country or Parliament, still, access to him was refused to all by his physicians, except the members of his family and immediate household, and they were charged not to mention business to him; it would be impossible to approach him.

When Sir Peter told me this, I became so weak I was forced to sit down. After a few

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

minutes of agony, a desperate resolve came to me. I rose, and said,—

“ I have a scheme — desperate, but not impossible. Go with me to the Prince of Wales. He is at Carlton House, but goes back and forth to Windsor.”

Sir Peter jumped at this poor chance, and we agreed to go immediately.

We had left York on a Friday, and had reached London on the Monday. Two days had been lost in the journey to Kent; and it was now late in the evening of Wednesday. We had, luckily, brought our uniforms along; and, dressing ourselves in them,— Sir Peter with all his orders sewn on his coat,— we called a hackney-coach, and drove to Carlton House.

When we got there, it was about ten o'clock in the evening. The windows were brilliantly lighted up, and it was about the hour that the Prince of Wales was known to be in his best humor — but the hour when he most hated to be disturbed.

We descended, and the sentries passed us through, on account of our uniforms and Sir Peter's decorations on his breast. We reached

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the door, and knocked. The porter opened the door gingerly, when Sir Peter, giving it a kick, walked in, followed by me. The man attempted to arrest our progress, but Sir Peter said to him fiercely,—

“Do you think, you damned lackey, that you can be insolent to an admiral in his Majesty’s service?” The man apologized humbly and ushered us into a large reception-room on the first floor, saying he would call the gentleman of the chambers.

We seated ourselves. Even in that time of agony, I noticed the beauty of the room — indeed, my senses seemed preternaturally acute, and every incident of that dreadful time is deeply fixed in my mind. The ceiling was of gilt, while around the walls were paintings of Flora. A gilt chandelier diffused light through the apartment, and at one side was a pair of large folding doors.

After a long wait, a gentleman, Mr. Digby, appeared. He received us politely, but said it was impossible to disturb the Prince then, as he was just sitting down to piquet. Sir Peter remained silent; he was used to giving orders, and

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the words, "It is impossible to see his Royal Highness," were peculiarly disagreeable to him.

I then made my plea. I told Mr. Digby that the life of a gallant officer and gentleman was in jeopardy, and that we begged to see his Royal Highness, in the hope that the king might be approached.

"That, too, is impossible," coldly replied Mr. Digby. "The king is far from well."

Just then, some one on the other side of the folding doors opened one of them the least bit in the world, and then closed it—but not before we had seen streams of light pouring from it, a long table brilliant with plate and ornaments, and a company of about twenty gentlemen sitting around it, and at one end sat a personage whom we at once recognized as the Prince of Wales.

Without a word, Sir Peter arose, and, darting toward the door,—for he was ever an agile man,—threw it open, and walked into the presence of his Royal Highness.

"Sir," said he, marching up to the Prince, "I am Admiral Sir Peter Hawkshaw, and I have boarded you, so to speak, sir, in order to

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

save the life of one of the gallantest officers in the service of his Majesty.”

I had always heard that his Royal Highness was a gentleman, and I saw then such an exhibition of readiness and good taste as I never saw before, and never expect to see again. Every one at the table, except the Prince, seemed astounded at the sudden entrance and startling address of a short active little man in an admiral's uniform. But the Prince offered Sir Peter his hand in the coolest manner in the world, saying,—

“Most happy to meet you, Sir Peter. I recollect well that you carried the *Indomptable* by boarding very successfully. But how did you get past the watch-dogs at the door, my dear sir?”

“By carrying sail hard, your Royal Highness,” responded Sir Peter, “and seeing this door open, faith, said I, to myself, having risked my skin these forty years for the king and his successors, sure, I can risk it once more by walking in on my Prince, and here I am, sir, ready to state my case. That bloody popinjay, Digby” (Digby was right behind him), “wanted

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

me to let you alone because you were about to go to piquet, but I think no prince of England would sacrifice a man's life to a game of piquet."

"Certainly not I, Sir Peter," answered his Royal Highness, rising, "and now I have an hour entirely at your service."

"Sir," said Sir Peter, "I ask the honor of shaking hands with you, not as a royal prince, but as an honest man and good fellow."

I think the Prince was ever susceptible to honest praise, for he was no fool, and he was undoubtedly pleased when Sir Peter wrung his hand. He then led the way into another room, and the door was closed.

The rest of the party behaved very civilly to me, and I accepted thankfully an invitation to have something to eat and drink. They were merciful to me, seeing my distress of mind, and did not plague me with questions, but resumed their conversation with one another.

Presently the Prince and Sir Peter appeared, and his Royal Highness said, with that charm of manner which seduced some men and many women,—

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“Hark’ee, Sir Peter; I do not promise that the affair will be complete before Sunday night; I go to Windsor early in the morning, and two days is a brief time in which to arrange so important a matter. But if you will be at Windsor on Sunday morning, I pledge you my word as a gentleman the paper shall be ready, signed, sealed, and delivered.”

At that Sir Peter fairly broke down, and could only say, “God bless you, sir, God bless you!” and the Prince, turning the old man’s emotion off gently, smiled and said,—

“’Tis for the preservation of the gallantry of our sex, Sir Peter, that this young officer must not hang.”

He warmly invited us to remain and finish up the wine, and then one of the gentlemen at the table, whether of design or not, mentioned the extraordinary reports which had just reached London concerning the trial at York, and I, encouraged thereto by a subtle look and a question of his Royal Highness, told the whole story, assisted by Sir Peter. It was listened to with the deepest interest.

Lady Arabella Stormont was known to every

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

person there, and the Prince remarked that he had danced with her at the last birthnight ball. Her infatuation for Overton was well known and freely commented on, and the strange measures that women will sometimes venture upon in the interest, as they think, of the man they love, was exemplified in her testifying against Giles Vernon. Sir Thomas Vernon's hatred of his heir was also well known,—and as the web was unfolded to the Prince he listened with an air of the profoundest thought, and his comment was significant,—

“The king can pardon.”

He had pity on us and did not press us to remain to cards, so we left Carlton House about an hour after entering it, and with hearts immeasurably lighter. Our first thought was to hasten back to our lodgings to send off our good news to Lady Hawkshaw and Daphne by the northern mail.

Sir Peter told me then that the Prince had directed him to go to Windsor in the morning and remain, and that he himself would bring him back on the Sunday morning, if the counter signatures to his Majesty's could not be had

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

before. The Prince was quite familiar with the procedure, and engaged to get the pardon from the king without difficulty.

Early next morning Sir Peter left me. It was agreed that I should proceed on the Sunday morning to the Bear and Churn, a tavern and posting station near London, on the northern road, to arrange in advance for the best cattle, in order that not a moment might be lost in returning to York. So, after two miserable days alone in London, while Sir Peter was at Windsor, I was glad on Sunday morning to be on the northern road, preparing for our rapid return to York. The Bear and Churn was directly on the highway, and was well out of London, being surrounded by green fields and orchards.

It was a beautiful morning, more like April than February. The greenness of the earth, the blueness of the heavens, the quiet of the country, after the rattle and roar and dun skies of London, were balm to my soul.

I reached the inn by ten o'clock; and, having arranged for their best horses, and sent word two stations ahead, I sat down to pass the day as best I might. I wrote a long letter to

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Daphne, and then, it being about twelve o'clock, I went out for a walk.

There was a pretty pathway, through a little grove, toward a rolling field, next the highway. I took this path, and presently came face to face, at a turn in the path, with Overton. He was singularly dressed for a man of his quality and profession.

He wore black clothes, with plain silver buckles at the knees, and black silk stockings and shoes. His hair, unpowdered, was tied with a black ribbon; but he wore no crape or vestige of mourning. I had ever thought him the handsomest man in England; but in this garb, so different from the brilliant uniform or other exquisite dress in which I had heretofore seen him, he looked like an Apollo. He greeted me gravely, but not impolitely; and we walked along together. He had heard of my marriage, and felicitated me on it.

My heart was so full of Giles Vernon that I burst out with the story. It seemed quite new to him; and he listened to it with breathless attention, occasionally ejaculating his horror at the conduct of Sir Thomas Vernon and of

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Lady Arabella Stormont. It gave me a savage pleasure to tell him every dreadful particular concerning Arabella; and by the look of consciousness which came into his expressive face, and by the way in which he avoided my eye, I saw that he knew he was a factor in the case against his will. At last, quite transported by my rage against these two, I cried out,—

“And it is for the purpose of securing the estate to you that Arabella Stormont thus swore away the life of Giles Vernon; but God will confound her and Sir Thomas Vernon yet!”

“Truly,” said he, in a thrilling voice, “God will confound all the wicked. He will bring this horrid scheme to naught in every way; for know you, if Lady Arabella Stormont were to throw herself on her knees before me—”

He stopped, and colored violently; he had not meant to admit what the whole world knew, — that Arabella Stormont had adored him for seven years past. He hurriedly changed the subject, saying,—

“Perhaps you do not know that I am no longer in the army.”

I said I did not.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

“Although I have recovered the use of my limbs, and look to be in health, I am not fit for service; and I was retired on half-pay only a few days ago. My life is not likely to be long; but released as I am, by God’s hand, from the profession of arms, I shall devote the remnant of my life to the service of the Lord God Almighty. His message came to me years ago, but I was deaf to it. I was in love with the world, and possessed by the flesh and the devil. I committed murders under the name of war. I dishonored my Maker by my dissipations. I spent in gambling and vice the money wrung from the poor that were bond-slaves to labor and poverty. I blasphemed, and yet I was not counted evil by the world.”

I listened and wondered to myself, should this be true, where stood we all?

Overton’s face had flushed, his eyes were full of rapture; he seemed to dwell in the glory of the Lord.

“But now I am free from the body of that death, and subject only to the yoke of the Nazarene,—the Jesus who labored with His hands to show that work was honorable; the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

Carpenter who called about Him those as poor as Himself, and preached to them the love of God and one's neighbor; who received the Magdalen as a sister and the leper as a brother."

I was silent. I had heard many sermons from deans and dignitaries,—all well-fed men, and every man jack of them after promotion from the Whigs,—and these sermons had left my heart as untouched as that of the wild Indian of North America. But this was different. After a while, Overton continued,—

"As this Jesus called all manner of men to follow Him,—the greedy tax-gatherer, as well as Peter the poor fisherman, and John the gentle and studious youth,—so He called me; and, like the tax-gatherer, whose stony heart was melted by the voice of Jesus, I say with tears, 'My God! I follow Thee!'"

We had now approached the corner of the field, and involuntarily stopped. I said to him blunderingly,—

"Shall you take orders?"

"No," he replied. "I do not aspire to open my mouth as a teacher—I am not worthy; but a few of the humblest people about here

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

—I have been in this place for some time — come to me on Sundays, in the forenoon, to ask me to speak to them. They are day-laborers, hostlers — the kind of people I once fancied to be without souls. I speak to them, not as a preacher and teacher, but as a brother and a friend. It is now time for them to assemble.”

I saw, sure enough, a number of poorly-dressed rustics coming toward the field. They came by twos and threes, the women mostly with children in arms, or hanging to their skirts. When all had arrived, there were about thirty men and women. They seated themselves on the grass, and I along with them, and, in some mysterious way, I felt, for the first time in my life, that the plowman was my brother, and the kitchen wench my sister.

When they were all seated, Overton took from his pocket a small Bible, and read the Sermon on the Mount. The people listened reverently. He gave them a short discourse, suited to their understanding, and then read to them a simple hymn, which they sang with fervor.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I listened with a strange feeling, half pain, half pleasure, half satisfaction, half dissatisfaction. I wished for Daphne's sweet spirit to be near me. It came to my mind how like was this meeting of the poor and unlearned to those held by the Carpenter of Nazareth on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. The hymn echoed sweetly over the green fields; it was a part of that great antiphon with which Nature replies to the harmonies of the Most High. The quiet scene, the woods, the fields, the kine in the pasture near by, all seemed one in this act of worship. But presently my soul was distracted by what I saw on the highway close by us. A handsome traveling chariot, followed by a plain post-chaise going Londonward, stopped. Out of the chariot stepped Lady Arabella Stormont, and, through an opening in the hedge, she entered the field. After a considerable interval, Mrs. Whitall followed her; and, after a still longer one, Sir Thomas Vernon.

Lady Arabella walked noiselessly over the grass, and, when she reached the edge of the group, stopped. Her eyes were full of laughing contempt at first, but, when Overton turned



“Will you speak to me?” Page 225

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

his glance full upon her, she suddenly assumed a look of seriousness, and folded her hands as if in silent prayer. Behind her, Mrs. Whittall's foolish face was all fear, while Sir Thomas Vernon grinned unpleasantly over her shoulder. Overton, without taking the slightest notice of them, at the conclusion of the hymn announced that he would make a prayer, and asked his hearers to join with him in a petition that the life might be spared of a certain young man, Giles Vernon, now under sentence of death in York jail. We all stood up, then, the men removing their hats. I held mine before my face to conceal my tears, while Overton made a brief but earnest prayer for Giles, and I could not refrain from crying, "Amen! Amen!" when he concluded.

The people then trooped off, and we, the gentlefolks, were left together.

Overton surveyed Lady Arabella and Sir Thomas with much contempt. Lady Arabella was the first to speak. She held up her head timidly, and said,—

"Will you not speak to me?"

"No," replied Overton sternly. "Giles Ver-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

non's life may be spared; but upon you is blood-guiltiness."

Arabella turned pale, and replied,—

"I was summoned as a witness. I was obliged to testify."

Overton said nothing. Then Sir Thomas, taking snuff with his usual grace, remarked,—

"I listened with attention to one lawbreaker praying for another lawbreaker. Of course, you know, this meeting of yours is seditious — and many a man has been stood in the pillory for it."

"And one Man," replied Overton, "Jesus Christ, was crucified for it."

He turned, and with me, took the path back to the tavern. I heard, as we went on, an altercation behind me, and involuntarily, after we had gone some distance, I looked back. Lady Arabella was struggling in the grasp of Sir Thomas Vernon, while Mrs. Whitall looked on, and wrung her hands. Sir Thomas, however, was no match for Arabella's young strength. She broke away from him, and, running after us, caught up, panting and breathless, with us, as we entered the little grove.

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

And then I saw an almost exact representation of the scene when Giles Vernon had insanely and with unmanly groveling and violence pleaded with Arabella for her love,—so she pleaded with Philip Overton. She held him by the arms, when he would have thrown her off.

“Philip! Philip!” she cried. “I did it for you! I determined to make you rich, great, even if you refused my fortune. Sir Thomas can not live long. Surely, *you* can not reproach me, if all the world does. The stupid, stupid world thinks I did it under the influence of Sir Thomas Vernon; but no, it was not hate for Giles Vernon, it was my love for you, Philip Overton, that made me appear at the York Assizes.”

“Remember yourself,” said Overton to her sternly. “Others, besides myself, see your degradation!”

“It is no degradation to love truly, to love as I do. Speak but one word to me, and I will become a Methodist like yourself. I, too, will go among the poor, and serve and love them; and I will even love God for your sake!”

The awful grotesqueness of this, the blas-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

phemy of it, was altogether unknown to her. She continued wildly,—

“Does not my soul need saving as much as those clods you have been praying with?”

“You blaspheme!” replied Overton, casting her off.

And, to make the resemblance between her own unwomanly conduct and the unmanly conduct of Giles Vernon the more singular, she recovered herself, as he had done, in a single moment of time. She laid her hand on Overton’s arm, and looked keenly into his eyes. Her glance seemed to enchain him, and to set her free. She breathed a long sigh, and, turning, gazed about her, like a person awaking from a nightmare. Then, with perfect self-possession, she dropped a curtsey to us both, and said, in her natural, playful manner,—

“Mr. Overton, I see I have been mistaken. I should have tried to cheat the law by not appearing when I was summoned; or, I should have testified falsely. And for my indiscreet conduct just now, let me tell you, for seven years I have been under a spell. It is now broken for ever. Titania once loved Bottom

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the weaver; but not always. I bid you good day, Captain Philip Overton, and you, Mr. Richard Glyn. And I trust Giles Vernon's life may be saved, if only to keep you, Captain Overton, as poor as you deserve to be. For myself, I shall shortly marry,—perhaps, Sir Thomas Vernon,—then, neither of you will get the estates. Good morning!”

And she was gone, flying along the field, with a white mantle streaming after her, and her flight as rapid as the swallows in spring.

XI

At twelve o'clock that night Sir Peter arrived at the tavern, and with the pardon.

The expectation of his coming, and the greater matter upon which we were engaged, prevented my mind from dwelling longer upon the strange scene I had witnessed between Overton and Lady Arabella. Overton did not speak her name to me, and showed much sympathy for us. When Sir Peter's chaise drove up to the door of the Bear and Churn, another chaise with four horses was waiting, and into it we huddled, bidding Overton a hurried farewell; and in another moment we were off for York, the horses doing their best.

Sir Peter then told me the circumstances of his visit to Windsor. The Prince, who was always most powerful when the king was on the verge of madness, saw his father and found him comparatively rational. The story being broached to him, he appeared interested, and even grew more collected as his attention was

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

chained. He recalled at once Sir Peter Hawshaw and the capture of the *Indomptable* and *Xantippe*, and corrected the Prince when he spoke of Sir Peter as Vice-Admiral of the White. It was a very easy matter to get his signature to the pardon, and the necessary seals and formalities took some little time but no trouble, and when Sir Peter presented himself at the Castle on Sunday, all was prepared for him.

We felt now comparatively safe. There was little doubt that we could reach York at least twenty-four hours in advance of the date set for the execution; our letters would precede us, giving positive assurances of hope; and we looked for no accidents, having a new and strong chaise.

After Sir Peter had told me his story, I told him mine about Lady Arabella and Overton. He was not much imbued with the kind of religion that Overton preached, although he swore roundly by Church and State, and was always a great churchman when he was slightly in liquor, which did not happen often. He therefore condemned Overton's sermon, which

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

I tried to repeat to him, as a damned, beastly low sort of religion, unfit for a gentleman to practise; but he admitted that Overton lacked neither brains nor courage. For Lady Arabella, though, he had the stern disapproval of an honest heart, and in his excitement swore both long and loud because of the short-sightedness of Providence in permitting such women to exist for the undoing of his Majesty's officers of both services.

We made good progress that night and the next day, which was Monday, and began to have strong hopes of reaching York Wednesday night. But on Monday, in the afternoon, the weather suddenly changed, a violent snow-storm set in, and our postboys wilfully, I think, drove us ten miles out of the way, near a tavern where they hoped, no doubt, we would agree to stop until the storm should be over. But Sir Peter, putting one of his great horse-pistols to the postboy's head, forced him to turn back to the high-road. We lost three hours by this; and when we got to our next posting stage, our horses, engaged two days ahead, had been taken. We got others, after a frantic effort,

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

but at the end of that day's journey we saw our margin of time diminished exactly one-half.

I shall not attempt to describe the fierce and gnawing impatience which consumed us, nor the awful and unspoken dread which began to overshadow us. Sir Peter was a man of stout heart, and had no more notion of giving up at this stage of the affair than he dreamed of surrendering when he saw the *Indomptable* to windward and the *Xantippe* to leeward.

The weather, however, grew worse instead of better, and even four horses could scarcely drag us through the mire made by the snow and rain. In spite of all we could do our progress diminished, although at no time did it seem hopeless, until — O God! twenty miles from York, at midnight on the Thursday, Sir Peter himself suddenly gave out; the strain had proved too much for his brave heart and sturdy frame. It came as the horses were wallowing along the road in the darkness, and I, holding my watch in my hand, was glancing at it every ten minutes, by the feeble light of the traveling lamp. I spoke to Sir Peter as he lay back in the chaise wrapped in his boat-cloak, and got

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

no answer. He was unconscious. Without stopping the chaise, I got some brandy, which I tried to pour down his throat, but could not. I grew much alarmed,—it was not like Sir Peter to refuse good brandy, and as we were passing a farmstead, I stopped the chaise, knocked the people up, and had Sir Peter carried into the house. I met with kindness, and I repaid it with coin of the realm. Sir Peter soon revived, and his first words were,—

“Push on, my lad. Don’t wait to repair damages.”

I found that his seizure was really trifling, and he assured me he would be able to resume the journey by daylight, the farmer agreeing to furnish him horses; so, in half an hour I had again taken the road.

And ten miles from York, the chaise broke down!

I had the horses taken out, and, mounting the best beast, made for York at the top of his speed, which was poor,—the creature was already spent with traveling.

It was just daylight, and streaks of golden glory were lighting up the pallid dawn; I urged

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

the poor beast onward. Seven miles he went, then he dropped dead, just as the sun was gilding the spires of York Cathedral. Before me, along the road, jogged an itinerant tinker on a rather good-looking horse, the tools of a tinker's trade hanging from a moth-eaten saddle. I was young and strong,—he was middle-aged and ill-fed and feeble. I ran up to him, holding five guineas in my hand.

“Lend me this horse to ride to York!” I cried.

The man, astonished at my abrupt address, stopped, but gave me no answer. I made my own answer, though, by dragging him off the beast, dashing the five guineas on the ground, and clattering off, throwing away the tools and kettles as I galloped along.

Already there were great crowds in the streets, and as I made my way madly toward the jail, I was often impeded. I shrieked, I screamed at the people, and waved aloft my precious paper, shouting, “Pardon! Pardon!” The cry was taken up, and swelled in a great roar that came from a thousand friendly throats. As I galloped along on the tinker's

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

horse, in a frenzy, through the crowded streets, an awful unspeakable Thing loomed up before me. It was the gibbet, and it was empty!

I felt the hot tears run down my cheeks at this, and some recollection of the God that Overton had preached to me caused me to utter an inarticulate thanksgiving! But if my tongue faltered, my heart did not.

At last I pushed my way through shouting crowds, to the jail. The people parted, and I saw a black cart drawn by a white horse, and Giles Vernon, with pinioned hands, sitting in it, by the side of the hangman. I noticed — as I did all the trifles of that dreadful time — that the jailer was ashy pale, and Giles was fresh-colored. I flung myself off my horse, rushed toward the cart, holding the paper above my head. Oh, the roaring and the shouting! I thrust it in Giles' face; the hangman, in a second, cut the thongs that bound the prisoner's hands. Giles took the pardon and kissed it, and then threw his arms around me and kissed me, and smiled and waved his hat in the air, while voices thundered, men shouting like demons, and women screaming and weeping.



I saw Giles Vernon with pinioned hands. *Page 236*

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

And the next thing I knew Daphne appeared, as if dropped down from Heaven, and, springing into the cart, clasped Giles; and Lady Hawkshaw, a little slower, but yet quick, descended from the coach, in which she and Daphne had come, and embraced all of us; and then, the cheering seemed to rend the skies.

In a little while, the mood of the crowd changed. They began to clamor for the blood of Sir Thomas Vernon. He was known to be away from home, but, as if by a preconcerted movement, a dash was made for Vernon Court, which was but five miles away. The military were called out, and the crowd stopped; but not without a collision, and several persons were badly injured, which did not tend toward better feeling for Sir Thomas.

For ourselves, I remained with Giles until he was duly released by the officers of the law, while Daphne and Lady Hawkshaw set off to meet Sir Peter on the road. They met him, five miles off, and brought him back to York in their coach. I shall never forget the scene when they drove up to the inn where Giles and I were already, the crowd, however, not allowing

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

him to remain indoors at all. When the coach hove to, the people, in their delight, picked Sir Peter up and carried him bodily up stairs, to an open balcony, and demanded a speech, followed by "Parliament! Parliament! Our next member!" and so on. Sir Peter made a speech,—the most wonderful I ever heard,—standing with one hand on Giles' shoulder, and the other on mine, with Lady Hawkshaw and Daphne in the background.

He began by roundly damning Sir Thomas Vernon, "and a lady who shall be nameless." Nevertheless, in spite of some vagaries, the speech was full of sound sense, and he promised the people, if they gave him their suffrages for parliament, he would do all in his power for the abolition of the barbarous law from which Giles Vernon had suffered so cruelly. He averred that it was impossible for a seaman, alone and unaided, to take care of himself on dry land, Jack ashore being a helpless creature at best, and but for Lady Hawkshaw he would probably have been hanged himself, long ago. This allusion to Lady Hawkshaw, who fairly divided the honors with Giles, brought forth yells of

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

delight from the crowd. Her ladyship appeared and bowed magnificently, and it was a regular triumph for us all, from beginning to end.

Next day, with Giles, we all started for London, the happiest coach-load of people in the three kingdoms.

Two days after our arrival, we read the announcement of the marriage, at St. George's, Hanover Square, of Sir Thomas Vernon to Lady Arabella Stormont.

Sir Peter was delighted at this match, and so was Lady Hawkshaw, and for once they were agreed. The position of the newly-married couple in London was anything but a pleasant one; for Giles became the object of public sympathy, and of popular and royal approval. The Prince of Wales sent for him, and our visit to Windsor, whither we all went to thank the king, was made a triumph for us. Sir Thomas and Lady Vernon were forbidden the court and Carlton House, and were frequently hissed in public. I saw them myself at Drury Lane, when they were hissed. Sir Thomas merely grinned, while Lady Arabella surveyed the

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

scowling faces before her with a slow sweet smile, and calmly played with the diamonds in her stomacher.

We had a whole year of happiness. The dreadful experience Giles had been through began to tell on him, and he was permitted to remain quietly a year on shore. And I, because of Giles, was given a year with my bride before I had to leave her. And what a year of blessedness it was to all! We all lived with Sir Peter and Lady Hawkshaw in Berkeley Square, and those two honest souls took delight in us. Lady Hawkshaw became a heroine, and the worthy woman enjoyed it thoroughly. Overton came sometimes to see us. A persecution had been set on foot against him; and he was several times arrested and sentenced for unlawful assemblage. But persecution was not the way to prevail with Overton.

It was very well understood who instigated these continued prosecutions, and that did not help to increase the popularity of Sir Thomas and his beautiful wife. At last, a year to the month after the trial at York, the last indignity was offered to Overton. He was sentenced to

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

be whipped at the cart's-tail, and set in the pillory.

There was a general rally of his friends; and on the winter morning when this barbarous sentence was to be carried out, a number, including many persons of note, were assembled at the prison, when Sir Peter and I joined them.

We soon heard that the government would not permit the first part of the sentence to be carried out; but when Overton emerged from the prison, he was unaware of this, and prepared for the worst. The holy calmness of his countenance and air brought even Sir Peter to admit that "the pious dog is a man, after all." When informed that he would not be whipped, Overton only remarked,—

"My Master was scourged. Why should I rebel?"

Arrived at the place of punishment, we found a great crowd assembled, of all sorts of persons, among them some of the highest quality. Overton saluted them, and with the utmost dignity submitted to the cruel and hateful punishment. He had, however, the undisguised sympathy of the officers of the law, as well as

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

of the crowd, and was treated with the utmost tenderness.

He was to spend three hours pilloried, and it was made the greatest triumph of his life.

It is possible for a good man undergoing unjust punishment to be dignified, even in the pillory; and so it was with Overton. His singular beauty, the mildness of his countenance, the uncomplaining fortitude with which he submitted to an odious and miserable position, the remembrance of his past military services, showed him to be every inch a man. Many of his friends came in their coaches, and, descending and going up to Overton, saluted him respectfully and expressed their sympathy, to which Overton gently returned thanks. At last a very splendid coach appeared. It was magnificently horsed with four thoroughbreds, and had outriders, besides two huge footmen with nose-gays. It drew up in front of the pillory, and within it sat Lady Vernon, superbly dressed; and in her arms she held a very young infant in a great robe of lace and satin. Two nurses sat on the front seat; and Sir Thomas' saturnine countenance glared behind Lady Ver-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

non's beautiful, triumphant face. The coach stopped; and Lady Vernon, holding the child up in her arms, directly in front of Overton's eyes, gave him a smile and a meaning look, as much as to say,—

“Poor wretch! your inheritance is gone!” The crowd, which was never in a good humor with the Vernons, began to hiss vigorously. This they appeared not to mind; but when hisses were followed by a shower of stones and sticks, the equipage rolled off at the top of its speed.

At twelve o'clock Overton was released, and at once he was exhorting the people to fear God and live truly to Him. He was not interrupted by the constables who were present, and was listened to with solemn attention. He has preached ever since, and has never again been molested. And when a dear little girl came to my Daphne,—I was then at sea, fighting the French,—Overton was at the christening, and made a prayer over her infant head, which my Daphne believes will keep that dear child good and holy all her life.

Giles Vernon, now Captain Vernon, in com-

The Loves of the Lady Arabella

mand of his Majesty's ship *Acasta*, forty-four, is counted the smartest of the young captains in the British service. The women still love him; but Giles has grown a little shy of going too far with them, and swears he will die a bachelor. However, there appears to be an affair forward between my little Daphne, who is now four years and six months old, and Captain Vernon, and I think something will come of it when she is of a marriageable age — and so thinks her mother too.

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